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HISTORY OF SCOTLAND

THE

HISTORY OF SCOTLAND

FROM AGRICOLA'S INVASION TO THE REVOLUTION OF 1688

BY

JOHN HILL BURTON

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It is in the year 80 of the Christian era that the territory in later times known as Scotland comes out of utter darkness, and is seen to join the current of authentic history. In that year Julius Agricola brought Roman troops north of the line which, hundreds of years afterwards, became the border dividing Scotland from England. The achievements of that

general hold a greater place in history than they would have reached had they not been told by his son-in-law Tacitus, the most powerful of Roman historians. The light thus cast on Scotland for a time is more remarkable for its brightness than for its clearness. It was brief, but sufficient to show to Rome that there was work in a distant land for the imperial troops. Of their subsequent doings we have occasional glimpses in contemporary literature. These are feeble and fragmentary. By scrupulously collecting them, however, adjusting them to each other, and interpreting them through such other aids to history as may be found, it is possible to see in some measure the place which Scotland held in the eyes of the empire from the days of Agricola downwards. In this way, looking from without, we may in some measure trace a historical continuity until the time when we can take up the threads of an internal national history, and follow the destinies of the inhabitants of Scotland until they and their country became, by a long process of growth and articulation, consolidated into a sovereign European state.

Of such previous events as bear on the invasion of Scotland by Agricola, it need only be said that the various warlike operations of Julius Cæsar in the south had been invasion, and no more. The successful general, and his assistants in the creation of the empire, had other things to think of for many years to come. It was not till the reign of Claudius, and the invasion of Aulus Plautius in the year 43, that the actual process of the annexation of South Britain to the empire began. This was nearly completed, in a superficial way at least, in the summer of 78, when Agricola

landed. The territory still standing out was North Wales, and that was at once subdued.

According to Tacitus, when the general had completed his conquests, he set to the task of subduing the hearts of the conquered people by assimilating them to the Roman civilisation. The method in which this end was usually accomplished, was a frugal distribution of the municipal privileges proper to incorporated Roman states. We are told that before the third season he had, by the conciliatory wisdom of his administration, given currency among the natives to the Roman dress and literature, and stimulated them to build temples and improved dwellings—and all within two years, a rather brief period for so great an achievement. The assimilation laid still stronger bonds on the natives by infecting them with Roman luxuries and vices. This is said in a spirit that would reveal the heartless cynic, were it not clear that it is a passing hit at the social condition of Rome and the morals of the court of Tiberius.

We do not know where he crossed the border, though an examination of the vestiges of the Roman progress in Scotland renders it likely that he marched along the east coast to the neighbourhood of Edinburgh.[1]

[1] The ordinary editions of Tacitus say that in its third year the expedition found itself among new tribes, and wasted the country as far as the estuary of the Taus. Hence it has been written in history that Agricola in that year devastated Scotland as far as the Firth of Tay. It is probable that the name of the Tay is derived from this Taus of Tacitus. In the search among existing local names for the origin of names used by authors such as Cæsar or Tacitus, the etymological process has sometimes to be suddenly reversed, and it is found that the modern name is derived from that of the classic author. Should it be found that the usual editions of such an author are in error—that from a blunder of an editor or a compositor in an *editio princeps* the world has missed the name for nearly four hundred years—a grand new ele-

The inhabitants were warlike and accustomed to bloody battles, but they had never experienced anything like the relentless pressure of a Roman invasion. If they suffered a defeat one day, they expected to retrieve it by a surprise on the next. Driven before the compact legionary force in the summer, they expected to starve it out in the winter. But they had to deal with an enemy which, when not upon the march, was sheltered by the intrenchments of an impregnable camp; and when the winter came, it found the invading army distributed in strong and comfortable fortresses amply victualled.

The next season was occupied in bringing under subjection the people of the territory occupied by Roman troops. The neck of land between the Firths of Clyde and Forth appears to have been the boundary where the general found that the outer line of Roman acquisition could be most effectually marked; and this

ment of confusion is cast in among the etymological and geographical difficulties. That is exactly what has happened to the Taus Æstuarius. Herr Karl Wex edited the Agricola of Tacitus in 1852, comparing the usual text with the best extant manuscripts. Among other corrections, for *Taus* he reads *Tanaus*. This opens up questions about the English and Scotch Tynes, and the corrector tries to settle the difficulty he has started by the rather strong supposition that the Scots Tyne had an estuary in the time of Agricola. There will be other questions, however, to adjust with other waters on the east coast, the Touai, the Taoua, and the Tinna of Ptolemy—all already sufficiently perplexing to the geographer. On one point, however, Herr Wex makes satisfactory use of his discovery. By the history of the war, as usually founded on Tacitus, we are perplexed by finding that in the third year of the expedition Agricola fought his way rapidly to the Tay, and that two years afterwards he made his way, as it would seem with much more difficulty, to the Forth. Having commented on this discrepancy, the corrector goes back and comments on his own commentary, saying that those who believe Agricola to have fought a great battle in Aberdeenshire "tamen tertio jam anno Agricolam usque ad Tauin progressum putare, quem errorem supra castigavimus."—Wex, Prolegomena, 105.

line is identified by the descriptive remark of Tacitus, that the natives, when crossing it, were driven, as it were, into another island. He drops a reflection on the aptness of such a boundary for the empire, if the bravery of the Roman army, and the far reach of the Roman ambition, could contemplate a boundary. Agricola ran defensive works across this line; and these were the beginning of the fortified rampart, renewed and strengthened from time to time, of which some remnants may still be seen. In the fifth season we are told that the general had several conflicts with the natives, and that he lined the coast opposite to Ireland with troops, not so much for the protection of the British territories, as with a view to further conquests. Ireland was a desirable acquisition, as it lay between Britain and Spain, and would finally round off the Roman empire in the north-west. Even in the possession of barbarians like the British, its harbours were frequented by many traders. Agricola cultivated the acquaintance of a certain Regulus, prince or chief of Ireland, driven forth by political animosities; and the general, probably founding on the information so obtained, often remarked to his son-in-law, that with one legion and a few auxiliaries Ireland might be annexed to the empire.

Meanwhile sinister rumours reached the general about the movements of the Caledonians, as Tacitus calls them;—his is the earliest known use of the name, and he applies it to the dwellers in the land north of the Bodotria or Forth. It was said that they were organising a great confederacy to drive out the invaders. A sixth season—the third of the war in Scotland—was approaching, and the general resolved, that a wiser plan than abiding within the fortified line would be, to

advance northwards, and let the Caledonians feel the weight of the Roman arms in their own strongholds. While he marched northwards, apparently by the east coast, the fleet of transports attended, crossing the firth and creeping along the coast. This gave the barbarians the sight of a new symbol of Roman power. Tacitus gives us a lively picture of camp life, showing how closely the fleet and the army co-operated. The soldiers and mariners would meet together in camp, and tell each other the adventures they had encountered, and the marvels they had seen—the one set discoursing of the forests they had penetrated, the rugged mountains they had scrambled over, the barbarians they had fought; while the others dwelt on the dangers of the deep and their nautical triumphs.

The barbarians were driven nigh to despair, but they still determined to resist. They made a sudden attack on some of the stations, and so shook the confidence of the Roman army that some of the prudent counselled an immediate retreat behind the line of forts stretching from the Forth to the Clyde.

The Roman general broke up his army, and moved it in three divisions. He had doubtless sufficient reasons for this tactic, but they are not made quite clear by his biographer's statement, that he had heard how the enemy were to fall upon him in several separate bodies, and that he looked with some alarm to an attack by overwhelming numbers having a superior knowledge of the ground.

The divisions do not seem to have been far apart; for one night, when the weakest of the three—being the ninth legion—was suddenly attacked, Agricola himself came to the rescue. The affair was memorable,

since the barbarians fought their way through the guards and ramparts into the sacred precincts of the Roman camp. When day dawned, the barbarians had to fight the ninth legion on the one side, and the reinforcements on the other. The chief struggle was at the gates of the camp, where those who had entered seem to have been forcing their way out. The Romans were the victors; and the historian says that, but for the help which the marshes and forests gave the barbarians in their flight, the affair would have ended the war.

The historian next gives a lively sketch of the effect of this success on the demoralised Roman army. It caused a revulsion from despondency to exultation and bravado so extravagant as to be little consistent with our notion of the disciplined stoicism of the Roman soldier. Those who were the most dubious before were ready for anything, and demanded to be led to the farthest extremity of the island. Still the barbarians were not tamed; and it was known, as the season passed, that they were combining from various quarters to strike a great blow, while they were removing their wives and children to a place of safety. So stood both armies when winter came on.

The next season was to be the decisive one. The Roman army marched onwards to a spot called the Mons Grampius, and there they found the enemy, upwards of thirty thousand strong, under a leader whom the historian calls Galgacus. They occupied a rising-ground, whence they spread down upon the plain. Agricola, afraid of being outflanked, stretched his line till it became thinner than some of his advisers

thought prudent. He laid his plan of battle so as to aim at the great boast of a Roman general—a victory without the loss of Roman blood. In the centre and front were eight thousand auxiliaries, including some Romanised Britons from the south. The legions were drawn up in rear of the camp as a reserve. The Caledonians are described as riding furiously about with chariots in the space between the two camps. Their weapons were arrows, small shields, and large pointless swords. While the fight was one of mere missiles, the Caledonians held their own; but Agricola directed three Batavian and two Tungrian cohorts to charge them with the gladius. For this sort of contest the weapons of the barbarians, and their method of fighting, were unsuited. They gave way, while other cohorts pressed on. The Caledonian chariots, it would appear, routed the Roman cavalry; but when they dashed at the infantry, the vehicles got embarrassed in the broken ground, and a scene of ruin and confusion followed, in which they were more mischievous to the charioteers themselves than to the Romans. The Roman general, seeing some of the enemy descend from the hill for the purpose of outflanking him, successfully competed with them in that tactic, and attacked them in the rear. It was, in short, a complete victory; and its historian in the usual manner describes the field covered with blood and broken armour—with the dead and the dying. There was a great slaughter in the retreat. Ten thousand is the number of slain set down to the barbarian side; three hundred and forty to the Roman. Next morning all was solitude—no enemy was to be seen; and Caledonia might be counted as annexed to the empire. There was, at

all events, no more to be done by Agricola, for after the next winter he had to return to Rome to face the jealous Domitian.

Such is the substance of the narrative given by Tacitus. It is the only distinct account of the doings of the Romans in Scotland, though they long struggled for its annexation, and were perhaps for three hundred years in occupation of more or less of the soil. Commander after commander brought over troops and fought battles north of the Tweed, but none of them had a Tacitus for a son-in-law. The life of Agricola, eulogised by Gibbon as "the most early of those historical compositions which will delight and instruct the most distant posterity," is clear and sparkling to perfection, and yet it is far from satisfactory for the purposes of true history. One feels how much better it would have been told to that end by a homely narrator like Herodotus, inquisitive about small matters, and telling all he knew. Tacitus did not write to instruct the world about the Caledonians, but to create a sensation at home, where his parent's fame and merits were overshadowed by the gloomy jealousy of Domitian. He had to paint up to such a purpose, and make his hero victorious in the stricken field in the face of a large army of disciplined troops. To bring the conventional character of the narrative to preposterous completeness, the leaders must each make a speech. It was the fashion of historical literature: all Livy's generals made speeches; and the leader of the barbarians must give his contribution as well as the cultivated Roman. How much more valuable would it have been to us had Tacitus deigned to tell us something about the tongue in which the leader of the barbarians spoke, or even

his name, and the name of the place where he fought, as the natives uttered it!

Yet, for the great interests of its day, the speech of Galgacus was far removed from a mere feat of idle pedantry. It was a noble rebuke on the empire and the Roman people, who, false to the high destiny assigned to them by Virgil, of protecting the oppressed and striking down the oppressors, had become the common scourge of all mankind. The profligate ambition, the perfidy, the absorbing pride, the egotism, and the cruelty of the dominant people—how could all be so aptly set forth as in the words of a barbarian chief, ruling over the free people who were to be the next victims? Accordingly, Galgacus speaks out with heart and will and power. So the noble savage tells his people to think well what the nature of the enemy before them is. They have not to deal with a nation like themselves, who may be victors to-day and defeated to-morrow, but with the conquering Empire who have doomed all the world to slavery. If they would forecast their fate under the empire, let them look at the enslaved nations of the south. Unconquered as yet, they are the last refuge of freedom, which will be extinguished by their subjugation. What will be the fate of them and their sons? Abject slavery in distant lands—slavery in the haughty Roman house, where the awkwardness and ruggedness of the new-caught barbarian make mirth for the older slaves, whose happier lot it is to have been reared in servitude. For their wives and daughters there is a lot more terrible still. The produce of their frugal industry will be reft, to add to the swoln stores of the rich oppressor. What a noble destiny not only to defy such a fate, but to be

the first to stem the tide of universal conquest—to be the avengers of past oppression, the liberators from present slavery! And what had such an enemy, in all the splendour of their martial array, to match a band of freemen struggling for all that freemen love? They were a gathering of mercenaries and serfs from all the ends of the world, held together by greed and tyranny, and ready to scatter before the first disaster. Down upon them then, and let each man fight as if the fate of his country and the liberties of the world depended on his single arm.

Such were the leading points of the barbarian chief's oration. They were so richly adorned with trope, climax, and antithesis, as to furnish many of those sentences which for their aptness and brevity are employed to give point to the aim of composition in the modern languages.[1] In later times, when the terrible retribution it received has given emphasis to the cruel injustice of Roman domination, no one has given such expression to its character as he who threw his rebuke right in the face of his offending fellow-countrymen. Even those noble lines in which Byron makes the dying gladiator ruminate over the coming vengeance for his fate, lag far behind the fiery eloquence and

[1] For instance, in the following passage more than one current quotation will be recognised:—"Nos, terrarum ac libertatis extremos, recessus ipse ac sinus famæ in hunc diem defendit: nunc terminus Britanniæ patet, atque omne ignotum pro magnifico est. Sed nulla jam ultrâ gens, nihil nisi fluctus et saxa, et infestiores Romani, quorum superbiam frustra per obsequium et modestiam effugeris. Raptores orbis, postquam cuncta vastantibus defuere terræ, et mare scrutantur: si locuples hostis est, avari: si pauper, ambitiosi: quos non Oriens, non Occidens satiaverit: soli omnium opes atque inopiam pari affectu concupiscunt: auferre, trucidare, rapere falsis nominibus, *imperium;* atque ubi solitudinem faciunt, *pacem* appellant."

concentrated invective with which the great historian endowed his Caledonian chief.[1]

If we take the narrative of Tacitus as sufficient evidence that Agricola fought a decisive battle in Scotland, no one has yet succeeded in showing where it was fought. General Roy, a critic whose authority should be highest, as he brought the experience of an engineer officer to aid his knowledge as an archæological scholar, has fixed it at Ardoch in Perthshire, a short way northward of the border of Stirlingshire. At all events, the Romans have there left ample traces of warlike operations. From these and other remains General Roy has tracked through Scotland as far as the borders of Aberdeenshire the progress of Roman troops, sufficient to make an army of 30,000 men, of whom he supposes that 26,000 might have been engaged in the great battle.[2] But this opinion has been vehemently disputed by persons who, with inferior qualifications for the task, have with far more dogmatism found other sites for the Mons Grampius. The question, in fact, occasioned a contest as memorable in literature as the battle itself in history. It is remarkable in the absoluteness with which each champion maintains that he has removed every particle of doubt that can affect the spot favoured by himself. In this way the reader of this special literature finds the field of battle shifting like a chessman over the several

[1] Among the fabulous kings whose lives and actions are given by Buchanan and the other early historians, Galgacus makes his appearance as Corbredus, surnamed Galdus, the twenty-first king of Scotland.

[2] 'The Military Antiquities of the Romans in North Britain, and particularly their ancient System of Castrametation, illustrated from Vestiges of the Camps of Agricola existing there—hence his march from South into North Britain is in some degree traced.'

parishes of the northern counties as far as Inverness and Aberdeen. About a century ago, when the Itinerary of Richard of Cirencester was admitted as the conclusive authority on all questions as to Roman geography in Britain, the question appeared to have been finally settled; for there, in the route of the ninth iter, the "ad Montem Grampium" is set down between the Ithan and the Cullen, and therefore close to Knock Hill in Banffshire. But the critics found inconsistencies in this location, and instead of inferring from them doubts about the genuineness of the Itinerary, they started the ingenious theory that Richard did not intend this to stand for the place where the battle was fought. It was merely a Roman station, named in commemoration of the great victory, on the principle followed by ourselves in such names as Blenheim Terrace, Trafalgar Square, and Waterloo Place.[1]

[1] What Richard says about this station and about the Grampian range, goes, with some other pieces of internal evidence, such as his discourse upon Druids, Triads, and the like, to prove that the book is a forgery. It professed to be a manuscript of the fourteenth century, written by a monk named Richard of Cirencester, made up by him from certain fragments left by a Roman general. The author gives a picturesque description of his abbot finding him at such unprofitable work, and rebuking him for wasting upon empty vanities and self-willed fancies the time, all too short, that should be dedicated to the proper meditations of the cloister. The book is elaborate, distinct, and well stocked with matter, sounding like valuable and authentic information, and its production is one of the most curious incidents in literary history. The person who stepped forth as the lucky discoverer of so precious a relic was Charles Julius Bertram, English Professor in the Royal Marine Academy at Copenhagen. He got into a correspondence with Stukeley the antiquary, in which he made a casual allusion to the existence of an old manuscript making important revelations concerning ancient British geography. By degrees he excited the antiquary's interest by sending him an extract and a facsimile of the writing, pronounced to be undoubted fourteenth-century work. It is not safe to pass such jokes on enthusiasts. Stukeley became desperate when he contemplated the pos-

Unfortunately, this dispute has been barren in result on account of a small specialty neglected by the disputants—a negligence which has compelled them to reason in a circle. They have taken it for granted that the "Mons Grampius" of Tacitus and the Grampian range of mountains in modern geography are the same thing; in other words, that the range was called the Grampians in the days of Tacitus, and that he merely latinised it. The great chain of hills stretching from the estuary of the Clyde to the mouth of the Dee, which throws out laterally the group of mountains forming the north-west Highlands, is known by the name of the Grampians. The name is no older, however, than the revival of classical literature, and must have been adopted from Tacitus when his works came to be read by the chroniclers. It is unknown in old documents, and indeed achieved an ascertained place

sibility of such a treasure being lost to the world. He insisted on possessing and publishing it, and became so earnest and determined that the perpetrator of the practical joke felt himself in a dilemma. He, a holder of a responsible office, and an instructor of youth, must either confess to a hoax or carry through the imposition. He chose the latter alternative. What puzzles one at first sight, is how any man could have a motive for a fabrication that must have cost so much labour; but in what has been said a motive is found. He reaped the reward of his labours in full. His revelation was accepted without hesitation, and revolutionised the existing notions about the geography of Roman Britain. Stukeley, who had the distinction of presenting the discovery to the British public, was the first dupe, but he found himself in respectable company. Gibbon, Pinkerton, Chalmers—all the archæology of the age—believed; and General Roy devoted the greater part of his work on the military antiquities of North Britain to "a treatise, wherein the ancient geography of that part of the island is rectified, chiefly from the lights furnished by Richard of Cirencester." The General was successful in proving how exactly existing remains of Roman works corresponded with Richard's geography. After all, the hoax was not absolutely useless; it stimulated inquiry, and in itself, what it professed to lay down on authority, were the guesses and theories of a learned and acute man.

in geographical books long before it was sanctioned by local use. It got some help from the popularity of the tragedy of Douglas, where young Norval's father fed his flock upon the Grampian hills; but even yet the term is not much used by the people. In the oldest ecclesiastical literature the range is expressively called Dorsum Britanniæ, the back or backbone of Britain. In east and central Scotland, where it makes a distinct division between north and south, it was long termed the "Month" or Mount. To cross the Month was to pass from the southern to the northern province of Scotland.[1]

Hence, instead of the Roman author taking the name of the battle-field from the native name of a chain of hills, we have given the chain of hills its name from that by which the Roman author designs the battle-field. We thus lose any guide which the geography of the Grampians might afford us for the discovery of the site of the battle. It may have been at any elevation sufficient to be called a Mons, according to the Roman notions of topography. If we ask what sound of a native name might have run in the recollection of Tacitus when he expressed the battle-field as "ad Montem Grampium," we are entirely helpless. If there was a native name bearing any resemblance to the Roman, it probably dropped out of existence in the many changes of population and institutions occurring in the sixteen hundred years between the occurrence of the battle and the inquiries after the place where it was fought.[2]

[1] So Wynton, when King Alexander held his Christmas in Aberdeen,—

"Oure the mowynth theyne passyd he sene,
And held his yhule in Abyrdene."

[2] This was written before the author alighted on the edition of the

In dealing with a country bearing the marks of repeated shiftings in the races that lived in it, and in their respective languages, it is necessary to trace the pedigree of words closely home before they can be trusted with any historical interpretation. Tacitus is the first to speak of the Caledonii. The term, once used, took rapid currency in Rome. His contemporary Martial alludes to the Caledonian Bear as if it were known in the gladiatorial shows, and vividly describes the robber Auriolus, nailed to the cross, torn by the brute, like Prometheus by his vultures.[1] When Quinctus Ovidius is banished to the province of Britain, the poet becomes sentimental on his friend leaving the cultivated leisure of Italian life for the stormy seas, and the island where he will behold the Caledonian Britons.[2] The term, however, until recent times, was exotic. There are no traces of it in old native literature and documents. As Tacitus had applied it to the people north of the Forth and Clyde, so, on the revival of classical literature, it came into use like the term

life of Agricola by the Herr Wex. He found there an announcement as startling to himself as it may be to others, and he thinks its import will be made all the more significant by leaving the statement about the origin of the name Grampians as he had written it. Herr Wex says it is a printer's blunder, which has passed current for four hundred years. The manuscripts he relies on tell him that Tacitus wrote not *Grampius*, but *Groupius* (p. 194). His reliance on the accuracy of this altered reading is all the more emphatic that the recent origin of the term Grampian seems not to have been known to him. He thinks, in fact, that there was in the days of Agricola a range known as the Grampians, but the battle was fought elsewhere, at a place called Groupius. Hence, as by a misprint they were led to search in the wrong quarter, he has a sympathy with those zealous disputants, rather than with *Walterus Scottus*, who, *in fabula sua* THE ANTIQUARY, *lepide eos cavilletur, qui in pugnæ loco inquirendo operam consumant.*

[1] Spectacul., epig. vii.

[2] Epig., x. 44.

Grampian Mountains, and obtained indeed much more ample popular acceptance, insomuch that it is difficult to shake the natural impression that it is of native growth. From what native word, if any, the Roman author latinised it, or whether it was coined out of some mere caprice, are now vain questions, on which the expounders of true history had better keep silence. Etymologists no doubt there are who profess to tell with absolute scientific certainty the native word from which the name was latinised. But to clear the path of history it is necessary to sweep away such conclusions, along with a heap of others equally ingenious and equally unprofitable.[1]

In the introduction to the Life of Agricola, it is casually said that the fleet, sailing round by the northern coast, discovered what had not been known, that

[1] There are no doubt many other instances of the same kind. The name of the place at the present day sounds like its name in classic literature. Naturally it is supposed that the ancient author found the name, and gave it Latin or Greek inflections; while on inquiry it will be found that the classic name found in the ancient author has been given to the place in modern times. How little likelihood there is of an identity between ancient Roman names and the indigenous modern names of the same places, we may find by comparing the old names with the modern names of the stations on the Southern Wall. The data for such a comparison are on the one side the names given in the Notitia Imperii, and the identification of their actual sites by inscriptions; on the other side, the known modern names. The arena here is so small that it gives no room for etymological escapades. In each instance we have the place and we have its name, ancient and modern. There does not seem among these to be a single modern name having any resemblance to, or connection with, the Roman name. Roman Procolitia is now Carrawburgh; Borcovicus is now House Steads; Hunnum is now Halton Chesters; Amboglanna is now Birdoswald; Vindobala is now Rutchester—a name which sounds as of Roman origin. For the ingenious process by which the ancient names are identified with their places, see Bruce's 'Roman Wall,' 47 *et seq.* If these identifications should be declared unsuccessful, we have still the fact that the ancient names belonged to the Wall, and that along it there are no modern names akin to them.

Britain was an island, and found and annexed the Orcades. This name remained steadily in use, and is represented by the Orkneys of the present day. Their name immediately swelled the list of Roman triumphs.[1] There certainly, however, have been no vestiges of a Roman garrison found in these distant isles, and the conquest must have been merely a symbolical annexation of some barren and scarcely-inhabited rocks. On this occasion it seems the fleet got sight of Thule, usually hidden by winter and night. This has been a fugitive name, the geographers never having fixed on a permanent abode for it.

The next point in which Roman history touches the northern part of Britain, shows how little had been done for the annexation even of the district immediately to the south of Agricola's line of forts—the Lothians and the border counties of the present day. The reign of the active, vigorous Hadrian breaks in upon the history of the folly and profligacy that were eating away the strength of the empire. He cared less for sounding conquests than to round off a compact empire, shutting out what he could not hold, rather than nominally claiming the subjection of the whole world. Accordingly, he raised a barrier at the boundary of the empire in Britain about the year 120. So much the early authorities have told us in the fewest possible words, leaving us to discover where he raised it.[2] Coins, inscriptions, and other testimony

[1] "Littora Jubernæ promovimus, et modo captas,
Orcadas, ac minima contentos nocte Britannos."—Juv. Sat., ii.

The tenor of this satire makes it a question whether the capture is spoken of in earnest or in ridicule.

[2] Ælius Spartianus, Monumenta Historica Britannica, lxiv., and Julius Capitolinus, ibid., lxv.

have enabled laborious investigators to decide beyond any question that the defensive work built by him ran along the line of the famous Roman Wall from the Tyne to the Solway. Thus far, and no farther, did he consider it prudent to count Britain an integral part of the empire. How much of this work was raised in the reign of Hadrian, is, as we shall see, a disputed question. That it was begun, however, in his reign, cannot be questioned; and being thus brought to the commencement of the work, we may follow it to its conclusion as well as we can, before turning to other historical events, which, however important they may have been in their time, cannot be so easily realised now.

If we could find any history of the construction of this great work, or any account of it when completed, in the literature of its day, it would be proper to use the information so obtained as material for the early history of Scotland. The work was raised to protect the British part of the empire from the inhabitants of this country, and in its costliness and strength was a measure of what Rome had to fear in that direction. True, it was not intended as a final boundary—as a line of frontier fortresses; for the empire did not contemplate final boundaries. But if we take it as, in military phrase, a base of operations—a support to armies conquering northwards—this makes it none the less a great piece of military engineering, in which the fate of the territory now called Scotland was deeply concerned. As we have, however, no contemporary history of the progress of the works, or survey of them when completed, we must be content with such information about their progress and completion as the fragments tell us.

Perhaps in no other way can one so realise the difficulties to be overcome, and the persistency of the empire in overcoming them, as by actually following the trace of the Roman wall. It is more than seventy miles long. It consists of several lines of works, besides the stone wall, which, when all were complete, must have been by far the most conspicuous. Where the nature of the ground permitted, the succession of the works taken in a section, as architects term it—the profile, in the language of the military engineer—was thus: On the north, towards Scotland, was a great ditch or foss. On the southern edge of this was the stone wall. To the south was an earthen mound or rampart, then a second ditch, and, still south of this, two minor earthen ramparts. All along, at intervals of about a Roman mile, were towers between fifty and sixty feet square. At larger intervals were the stations, fortresses, or barracks—about twenty in all,—groups of buildings, each within a strong well-fortified wall.

How such a multiplied line of works was necessary for the intended object, we cannot now exactly judge. Knowing the Romans to be a wise and skilful people, we must suppose that each portion of the great work had its proper object. It stood alone. There were no other works of the same kind to make the raising of them a practice and a science. Hence the books devoted to military affairs, which tell us of the economy of the camp and the organisation and discipline of the army, give us no account of the principles on which a fortified wall should be raised across a country from sea to sea.

Even in those places where the stone wall is invisible, and the plough has crossed the profile for centuries,

the work leaves its stamp on the physical geography of the district. The appearance on the surface of the land would at once provoke inquiry of one coming on it by surprise, and ignorant that he was on the site of a work of ancient engineering. The succession of ditch and mound, smoothened into hill and valley, stands forth on the scale of natural scenery, yet cannot be reconciled to natural conditions, which will nowhere show us a succession of such curves running straight onwards in parallel lines out of all harmony or co-operation with watercourses and other natural causes of inequality. On uncultivated ground the features are of course stronger, and especially where they have to be carried through trap-dikes or other masses of irruptive rock. Here the sides of the ditches are precipitous, and the masses of rock—some of them many tons in weight—lie thrown on the edge like portions of those great gatherings in mountain districts which geologists tell us are the moraines of ancient glaciers.

The remains of the stone wall, still to be seen over long ranges of country, show that it varied between six and nine feet in breadth. Before the days of artillery this afforded superfluous strength. The perfection of the workmanship gave it far greater strength and durability than ordinary buildings even of the present day. It was laid down in courses of square hewn freestone, of a peculiarly compact and durable quality. The facings were of that perfect kind which, among modern stone buildings, is only to be found in those which aim at high excellence in the hewing and the laying of the courses. Where the wall passes from sandstone deposits there would have been a temptation to employ the limestones or trap boulders lying abundantly

around; but still the fastidious Roman engineer brought with him the square-cut blocks of freestone. Even the present remnants show that he was right, if it was his design to raise a fabric that, with a little attention, might be kept in perfect order and condition for unknown ages to come. On precipitous storm-swept ridges of rock, where ordinary buildings would have left mere shapeless heaps of stone, we see the horizontal courses lying in clean rows one above another; and when the wall has to mount a hill, each successive course stands out horizontally at an angle to the hill, the edge making the steps of a stair.

We have no means of proving the original height of the wall. The most complete remnant is about eight feet high. Erdeswick, an English antiquary of the sixteenth century, found it sixteen feet high; and his estimate is virtually confirmed by Camden, who visited the wall in the last year of the same century, and found that "within two furlongs of Carvoron, on a pretty high hill, the wall is still standing, fifteen feet in height and nine in breadth." If we suppose it to have been from eighteen to twenty feet high, and allow from ten to twelve feet for the ditch which accompanies it on flat ground, there was here some thirty feet of perpendicular rampart facing the barbarian who came to assail the marches of the empire.

The wall differs from other Roman military works in courting rather than avoiding rugged heights. The Watling Street, which, crossing it at right angles, passes on into Scotland, goes onwards in a straight geographical line, descending and ascending as the country sinks and swells. The wall, on the other hand, deviates to seek heights, some of them very high and steep. But

in this, too, there is a persistency of purpose. The object is to command every rising-ground on the side of Scotland. Thus from the wall there was a full open view northwards: if at any one point it were interrupted by some height, yet from a little to the right and a little to the left of that point the lines of vision would meet, sweeping the districts behind the interruption.

At Chollerford the wall is cut by the river Tyne. Here late searches have brought to light the massive piers of a bridge; one is under water, the other was deep hidden in the earth, a clump of trees growing above it. When the covering that had thus hidden it was removed, it was revealed in its powerful proportions. In the geometrical accuracy of its lines and angles, and the precision of its cutting, it is very like a piece of modern harbour engineering. It is constructed of large rectangular blocks, closely fitted and nailed together by iron rods fastened with lead. If we judge from the strength of its foundation, the bridge itself must have been a noble structure.

The force told off for garrisoning the wall was so important as to occupy, like the official staff of a province, a department in a Roman document which might be called a Return of the civil and military establishments of the empire; and of the local distribution of the several parts of each.[1] We have here six prefectures, with sixteen military prætors. There still remain some vestiges reminding us of the state of affluence in which the empire would naturally support so important an establishment. The mouldings

[1] Notitia Imperii (see the British portion in Monumenta Historica Britannica, xxiv.) Item per Lineam valli.

and decorations on the fragments of buildings tell us that they were raised for show as well as use. Many pieces of costly statuary and stone have been found, with jewellery, fine Roman pottery, and other tokens of luxurious wealth. The extent of the foundations of the garrison buildings speaks of numbers assembled within their shelter, and the pavements of the well-fortified gates of the stations may be seen worn by the traffic of busy feet.

It is in this great process of engineer-work, crossing the country from sea to sea, that we must look for the barrier erected about the year 120 by Hadrian, to mark and defend the boundaries of the empire for the time being. The question remains, How much of the line of works was completed under his auspices? It is known that the Emperor Severus, about a century later, left his mark upon the works, and was honoured for doing so. It was thence an opinion long accepted that Hadrian had merely raised the earthworks which form the southern department of the process, and that the stone wall, with its northern fosse or ditch, were the work of Severus. There are reasons, however, for believing that the whole design of the wall goes as far back as Hadrian's time, and that nothing remained to be done to it in the reign of Severus beyond restoration, and perhaps improvement in detail. Hadrian's energies were especially thrown into works of building and engineering. For these throughout the empire generally his name was commemorated. He took among emperors the distinguishing title of Britannicus. It was first awarded to him, and for his actual achievements—to others it was given afterwards out of mere precedent, like the

titles apt to cluster round royalty after the realities they represent are gone. What he accomplished in Britain was recorded in the current money of the empire by at least two issues of coinage. One commemorates his arrival in the distant island. It has his profile on the chief side, and the ceremony of inaugurating a votive altar on the converse. The other coin has a peculiar interest. Again the Emperor's likeness has the side of distinction, and on the other is Britannia—a draped female figure, seated, holding a spear, and by her side a round shield, with a spike projecting from its centre. What was symbolised in this has been a puzzle to the valuable class of archæologists who deal with coins. One interesting fact seems certain, that it is the precedent from which the Britannia on the later copper coinage of the British empire has been copied.

None of the inscriptions found near the wall give a distinct record of those who made it, and we shall find that of the northern wall there is a record of that kind in a very distinct shape. But use has been made even of this want of testimony. The practice of making such records had not, it is said, arisen in the time of Hadrian—it was in full fashion in that of Severus; and yet in such vague memorials as there are, the name of Hadrian is the more frequent of the two.

Stronger far, however, than testimony of a kind in which one incident may upset another, is the general knowledge of the disposition of the Romans to do a thing completely and in a special way when they were at it. They hated patchwork and makeshifts, and rather than take advantage of any imperfect work to complete that on hand, would reject it, and do the new

work from the beginning. Hence, that in one reign a stone wall should have been built in conjunction with the mound raised in a previous reign, and in the view of converting it into an effective bulwark, is inconsistent with Roman sentiment and practice.

Though we may not be able to tell how the works were to assist each other, no one who sees them can doubt that they were adjusted to each other with that design. It may be remarked that the earthworks are frequently laid on a southern slope, which is commanded by the stone wall, and would be commanded from its site were no wall there. That the earthworks were subservient to the wall is as nearly proved as such a thing can be, by the two never crossing each other. The earthworks all along have their proper side on the south, towards the country to be defended; while the stone wall, with its ditch, faces the enemy. These, with other tokens of less moment, are thus summed up by the man entitled beyond every other to give a judgment on the matter with authority: "After all, the works themselves furnish us with the best proof that the whole is one design, and the production of one period. It is difficult to conceive how any person can traverse the line of the barrier without coming to the conclusion that all the works, vallum wall and fosse, turrets, castles, stations, outposts, and military ways, are but so many parts of one great design, essential to each other, and unitedly contributing to the security of a dangerous frontier."[1]

[1] The Roman Wall, by the Rev. John Collingwood Bruce, 364. Throughout the little world devoted to such inquiries, high expectations have been raised by the immediate prospect of a new edition of Dr Bruce's work. Many things have been discovered since the edition of 1853; among others, the foundations of the great bridge across the Tyne.

But whether he completed this great process of fortification or not, it is certain that in the reign of Hadrian, and about 120 years after the birth of Christ, a barrier was raised on the line now followed by the works. This leads us to a significant historical position. We have seen that Agricola carried his victories to the Tay or farther, and deemed that, leaving a margin of chastised and frightened barbarians outside, he could safely draw the boundary of the settled empire from the Forth to the Clyde. But within forty years the most energetic and warlike of emperors has to bring the boundary southward to the Tyne and the Solway, and there to prepare against attacks from the north by a line of works of memorable strength.

The next point where the history of the empire touches Scotland, affords a fugitive and tantalising glance at military operations, probably much greater than even those of Agricola. Just one of the historians of the period, known as Julius Capitolinus, mentions that the Emperor Antoninus Pius conquered Britain through his lieutenant, Lollius Urbicus, and built a second wall to keep the barbarians back; and

It will be seen whether anything has been found that will shake his opinion about the unity of the design of the works. The cuts in the last edition are a valuable aid to the thoroughly exhaustive matter of the text, but rumour imports that the new edition is to be still more profusely decorated. But the fireside archæologist may not be aware of the full extent of Dr Bruce's services to the cause. When he has filled his mind with expectations and hopes by the wonders displayed in the thick volume, 'The Wallet Book of the Roman Wall' will lead him infallibly and easily to every one of them. What a blessing it would be to those who desire to spend their leisure in rambling about notable spots in other parts of the world, could they find such a "guide, philosopher, and friend"—such a delightful substitute for that combination of ignorance, arrogance, vulgarity, obsequiousness, and general power of tormenting, which is provided for the traveller in the person of the commissioner or local guide.

this is said in a clause of a rounded sentence which includes his subjugation of the Moors, the Germans, the Dacians, the rebellious Jews, and a group of other nations unnamed. The diligence of antiquaries has brought forward many testimonies to the activity of this emperor's officers in Scotland, and one inscription found near the northern wall mentions the name of Lollius Urbicus; thus the stone found in a field in Scotland tells us that the name has not been mistaken by the Roman annalist, or misread by his editor, but tells us nothing more about the conqueror of Britain.[1]

[1] Nothing is known of Julius Capitolinus except that he was the author of several of the memoirs published in the small collection called the 'Historiæ Augustæ Scriptores,' a book full of curious and significant details, which commend themselves to belief by their own internal evidence, though we know little or nothing either of the writers themselves, or of their sources of information. The passage above referred to, taken from the 5th section of his Life of Antoninus Pius, is as follows:—

"Per legatos suos plurima bella gessit; nam et Britannos per Lollium Urbicum Legatum vicit; alio muro cespeticio, submotis Barbaris, ducto; et Mauros ad pacem postulandam coegit; et Germanos et Dacos et multos gentes, atque Judæos rebellantes contudit per præsides ac legatos."

Its importance as an item of historical evidence renders it proper to look minutely to the authenticity of the inscription in which the name of Lollius Urbicus occurs. It is on a small broken slab among the altars and other memorials of the wall of Antonine, preserved in the University of Glasgow. Gordon says of it,—

"There is another inscription in this University which is not of a large size, being only 1 foot 8 inches long, and 1 foot broad, and not at all ornamented; yet it is the most invaluable jewel of antiquity that ever was found in the island of Britain since the time of the Romans, having this incription, P. LEG. II A. Q. LOL. VR. LEG. AVG. PR. PR, which is unanimously read thus—Posuit Legio secunda Augusta Quinto Lollio Urbico Legato Augusti Proprætori—that is, that the second legion Augusta set up this stone in honour of Quintus Lollius Urbicus, the Legate and Propræter of the Emperor."—Itiner., p. 63. Interpretations of contracted inscriptions are generally open to dispute, and this has not gone unquestioned (see Horsley, Britannia, p. 198), but it is sufficient to establish a reference to the legate mentioned by the annalist.

It may be mentioned that the Augustan annalist Lampridius refers to

The meagreness of all ancient record of the achievements of Lollius Urbicus is worthy of emphatic mention and recollection, because his name has got into the ordinary abridged histories which speak of it and "his campaign in the north" as well-known events, of which people naturally expect fuller information elsewhere. The usual sources for reference regarding him will, however, be found utterly dumb.[1]

The emperor's own share in the glory of the conquests of the reign of Antonine is recorded in the tawdry eloquence of the panegyrists. A more solid memorial to his name is preserved in the many inscriptions found near the rampart built by his army across Scotland. The date most prominently connected with the structure is 139. It is called a cespitous wall—that is, made of the material to be found readiest at hand, whether turf or stone, and not systematically built of brick or of stone. Its profile is a rampart and a ditch, and it had been well fortified at intervals. Commencing a little way west of Blackness on the Forth, it runs across the island to West Kilpatrick on the Clyde, being at either end close to navigable waters, open to easy communication with shipping. It seems to occupy the same line that the military eye of Agricola caught as the most available for cutting off communication, by keeping the barbarians of the north, as it were, in another island. It became long afterwards the natural line of contest when the north and the south were divided: many

a history written by a Lollius Urbicus, not now known to exist. It is a history of his own time; and from the way in which it is referred to, it would seem to be written by one who lived at the same time as the legate of Antonine, whether the legate and the historian were the same or not.

[1] He must not be confounded with the Lollius who, in the age of Augustus, was defeated by the Germans.

critical battles were fought close to it, and it became proverbial as a check on the inroads of the northern people, by the old expression, "The Forth bridles the wild Highlandman." More cheerful tokens have marked the importance of its topographical character. The two chief towns of Scotland have arisen at either end of it, and a canal uniting the two seas crosses it, side by side with the first great trunk line of railway laid down in Scotland. Such was the line of defence taken up a second time by a body of Roman invaders.

A paved military way followed the line of the wall. The works have suffered much recent obliteration, but in the latter end of last century they existed in sufficiency to enable the Engineer officer, General Roy, to lay down the plans of ten forts more or less entire.[1] He gives it as his opinion and the result of his minute survey that there had originally been nine other forts. Looking on them with a military eye, he admired the skill with which the existing forts, without being separated from the wall, found sites which gave an ample survey of the neighbouring country, especially towards the north, whence the enemy might be expected. He noticed, too, that the Roman engineers had contrived, "as often as circumstances would permit, that a river, morass, or some difficult ground, by way of obstruction and additional security, should extend at some little distance beyond their front." "Another principle," he tells us, "which the Romans have observed with regard to the situation of their forts, and

[1] They will be found in a long folding-plate in his great work, along with a general plan of the wall. The names of the forts, passing from east to west, are Rough Castle, Castlecary, Westerwood Fort, Barhill Fort, Achindavy Fort, the Peel of Kirkintilloch, Bemulie Fort, New Kirkpatrick Fort, Castlehill Fort, and Duntocher Fort.

which is perfectly consonant to the modern practice, is that of placing them at the passage of such rivers as crossed the general chain of communication. Thus a fort seems certainly to have stood at Inner Avon, though now washed away by that river, which is one of the most considerable that cuts the wall. A brook passes by Rough Castle, and another by the station at Castlecary. The Peel of Kirkintilloch commands the passage of the Luggie and its junction with the Kelvin. The passage of this last river is defended by the Fort of Bemulie; and Duntocher Fort has secured the communication across the small river of that name."[1]

A work like this seems to have been an object of pride to those concerned in it, from the emperor, under whose auspices it was undertaken, down to the humblest auxiliary who handled a spade. It is fortunate for historical precision that the practice of recording such works by inscriptions was then in full fashion. Inscriptions, from time to time found near the wall, account by items for the greater part of the work. It is important to look into these items, not for any interest we can now have in the legion which completed any specified portion of the work, or the centurion who helped in planning it, but because the close fitting of these minute particulars gives us a warrant for fixing the various broader conditions under which the boundaries of the Romans were with a view to permanence established so far within the territory of existing Scotland. We learn that three legions, each holding celebrity in its day, were engaged in the work,—the second, named "Augusta;" the sixth, "Victrix;" and the twentieth, "Valens Victrix." A separate inscription tells

[1] Military Antiquities, p. 154.

that the first cohort of the Cagernians, or allies from the Lower Rhine, now the neighbourhood of Cleves, executed 3000 paces. The first cohort of their neighbours, the Tungrians, did a portion, not quite so clearly ascertained. The items specifically accounted for make a total of 29,815 paces; in round numbers, thirty Roman miles, or about three-quarters of the total length.[1] The legion Augusta made more than 11,000 paces. It seems to have been entirely devoted to the work, and is supposed to have been on a reduced establishment. Of each of the other two legions a detachment only was employed; hence it may be inferred that the chief body was otherwise engaged. Of the length of time occupied in this work we have no means of judging.

After the brief notice of Lollius Urbicus none of the contemporary historians say a word that can apply to doings in Scotland for forty years. In the reign of Commodus, and the year 181, the same when Christianity is supposed to have taken its first hold on North Britain, there was a great outbreak in the north. The barbarians broke through the rampart separating them from the Romans, killed a Roman commander, whose rank is not particularised, with his followers, and committed other mischief. We have no means of determining which of the walls was carried on this occasion, and it has, indeed, been thought that the terms used might rather apply to the garrison of a Roman station than to either of them.[2] The brief narrative

[1] Compare the survey in Horsley's Britannia with the revisal of it by Roy, Mil. Ant.

[2] The rampart they got over is described as τὸ τεῖχος το διορίζον αυτους τε καὶ τὰ τῶν Ῥομαιων στρατοπεδα.—Ex Xiphilino Mon., lix.

of the event has come to us in conditions signally unsuited to afford conclusions from minute verbal criticism, since it is only preserved in an abridgment of a lost history, made when it was eight hundred years old. From the same source we may learn that the troubles in the north were suppressed by a certain Marcellus Ulpius—not to be confounded with the eminent jurist of that name—who is rather broadly and coarsely drawn as one of those ascetic and rigid leaders who allow little rest or enjoyment either to themselves or others. The feature in his conduct most fully dwelt on is, that he got all his bread from Italy; and lest this should savour of a fastidious, if not a luxurious table, it is explained that his object was that the staleness of the food might prevent him from over-eating himself.

In these exceedingly fragmentary and imperfect glimpses of the doings of the Romans in the north, it is necessary to bring in the narrator as part of the story, to give it anything like a distinct character.[1]

[1] If this, and much that precedes and follows it, be held to be inconsistent with history, as a succinct narrative confined to the country of which it is the history, the only excuse to be pleaded for it is that of poverty. The practice has parallels in other branches of literature. As history condenses the results of archæological research into a distinct narrative, so a writer on physical geography condenses the facts of various topographers and scientific investigators into a system. When dealing with districts fully examined and often traversed, he will not break in upon the systematic arrangement of his ample materials, by dilating on the adventures and character of the many persons who have collected them. But when he comes to the scanty notices provided by some adventurous explorer of a district full of wonders, the man who provides it becomes part of the material—the question of his opportunities, his sagacity in perceiving, and his fairness in narrating, along with many others, comes into the process of estimating the character of the phenomena he announces. So in an account of the state of any science, it will be away from the purpose to notice all the eminent men who have concurred in making that science; but should there be an announcement that some unexpected discovery has been made by one man, his character, his capa-

The outbreak just mentioned, and some incidents to be presently referred to, were first related by Dion Cassius, who was born at Nice, and died some eighty years old at the conclusion of the third century. He held many offices, and reached the consular dignity. After having written some pieces of contemporary history, he set about the ambitious project of a history of Rome from the Siege of Troy down to the year 229, when the author retired from public life, to spend his remaining years in his native Nice. The work was distributed over eighty books. Only a small portion of these now remains. It happened that an ecclesiastic of the Eastern Empire, of the eleventh century, undertook the task of abridging the eighty books. All that is known of him is, that his name was Xiphilinos, and that he was the nephew of a patriarch of Constantinople of the same name. Those who profess to have critically examined his abridgment in parts that can still be compared with the original, report him as a faithful drudge, whose work is to be depended on, unless where he happens to mistake his author's meaning. It is in this diluted shape that we have the part of the work most valuable in this country—Dion's Contemporary Notices of the Wars in Britain.

Dion had a mind saturated with credulity and superstition. This is at once visible in the avidity with which he luxuriates on the portents and auguries, which

city, and the way in which he has set about his discoveries, will be a natural feature in the rendering of them.

The author pleads, moreover, for some toleration of discursiveness in these earlier chapters, since the materials whence they are extracted, however interesting and exciting to the initiated, are, he suspects, condemned by the rest of the world as about the most dreary and unreadable matter in all literature.

his contemporaries mention with decorous gravity as with a sceptical homage to the accepted belief of their social circle. Supernatural meteors appear in the āir, strange beasts walk the earth, statues are cast down by no hand of man, the names of emperors are struck by lightning out of inscriptions,—such are the portents occurring at every turn before some event of his eventful period. It is proper to note this, as the spirit of the narrator was likely to tinge even the brief story he has to tell of our remote country.

Such is the authority on which we must take our knowledge of an invasion of Caledonia by the Emperor Severus, in the beginning of the third century. We have first a description of the country and the people. Two tribes are of chief mark among the Britons, the Mæatians and the Caledonians; if there have been others, their names have become subsidiary to this great division. It is not meant that the Mæatians filled all Britain beyond Caledonia; on the contrary, we are told that they only occupy the country near the wall. The Southern Britons were, it must be supposed, so thoroughly Romanised that they would not be called tribes. The Mæatians as a tribe were under Roman dominion, and it has been conjectured, on tolerably good grounds, that they were the inhabitants of the territory between the two walls.

Of the Caledonians living beyond the northern wall we have something like the usual rhetorical account of a people tameless and warlike, inhabiting a country congenial to their nature in its ruggedness. Where it is not marshy it is mountainous, and the mountains are censured as unwatered—a character wide of the truth. The inhabitants have no towns or houses, but

live in tents. They go naked, and can stand a wondrous amount of hardship and fatigue; and as a special manifestation of these powers, they get credit for hiding in the marshes many days together, so buried in the mire that their heads only are visible. They have no cultivation, but live by pasturage, the chase, and the wild produce of the earth. It is a specialty of their taste that they eat none of the fish which are at hand in inexhaustible abundance. They fight with chariots drawn by short fleet horses. When on foot they are rapid runners, and desperate fighters if taken at bay. Their arms are a shield and a short spear with a hollow ball or rattle at the end, which they shake to frighten their enemies. Another contemporary annalist, Herodian, gives an account of them corresponding to this in its formidable outlines; and he adds the specialty that their bodies are painted, and that they are chary of donning any clothes that would conceal the pictures, or of doing anything that would efface them.

The events which immediately preceded the invasion by Severus, show how important a province Britain had become. Albinus was aiming at the Cæsarship. He was too powerful in his distant command to be openly put down, and Severus professed to make overtures to take him into partnership as joint Emperor. Albinus, however, had his reasons for distrusting the proposal; and, resolved to strike a blow for himself, he crossed the Channel with his troops. Between him and the emperor a great battle was fought near Lyons. It was a protracted contest, and a considerable body of Britons in the army of Albinus got the credit of its stubborn resistance. It was at last, how-

ever, defeated, and the Emperor Severus had his hands free for foreign conquest. He sent over Lupus to take the command in Britain; but that officer, bribing instead of beating the Mæatians into conformity, appears to have been far from giving satisfaction to his ambitious master, who resolved to go to Britain himself with an overwhelming force, with which he determined to annex the whole island.

His health was wretched, and the announcement of the auguries was, that he would never return from his expedition; but he was not to be shaken, and he marched northwards in the year 208, leaving his son in command of the troops in the Romanised south of Britain, while he fought in the north. The two authorities are nearly alike in saying, that in forcing his way through Caledonia his army encountered incredible hardships, and was sorely harassed by the people, who fought from ambushes and cut off detached parties. Woods had to be cut down and streams to be bridged; roads were made and mounds levelled. Making his progress thus with slow determination, he came almost to the extreme end of the island, where he must have remained for some time, since he noted the great difference between the length of the day in summer and in winter. This representative of the patient determination of character which carried Rome over the world, was so infirm that he was borne on a litter; and it is recorded that, although he never had an opportunity of fighting a battle, he lost fifty thousand men in the expedition. He secured to himself the rank of Britannicus, and the coinage represented him laurel-crowned, with the winged figures of Fame exulting over the representation of two captive Britons. The auguries

were, however, to come true; he died at York. His ashes were taken back to Rome, and his sons, who were supposed to have hastened his death, commemorated him in a very pompous symbolic funeral ceremony. The wall between the Tyne and the Solway has got the name of the Wall of Severus. It is not mentioned by the chief authorities about his actions, but elsewhere it is casually said that he built a rampart across the island. It is only in the compilations of later writers that it is directly asserted that he raised the great wall. The reasons for attributing this work to Hadrian have been already noted. It does not seem to have been consistent with the ambitious projects of Severus to have contented himself with drawing the boundaries of the empire so far back.

The notices of the northern part of the island by contemporary Greek and Roman writers become henceforth scanty. What we have of them, seconded by the remains found in Scotland, leaves the impression that the actual bounds of the empire were for some time the northern wall, and that no serious attempt was made to annex the Caledonian territory beyond it. It is stated in the monastic compilation attributed to Nennius, that in the year 293 Carausius refortified the northern rampart through Scotland; but none of the contemporary annalists seem to attest this statement.[1] The history of this same Carausius shows the importance acquired towards the end of the third century by Britain as a province of the empire. He

[1] The series of extracts in the Monumenta Historiæ Britannicæ enables one to draw such general conclusions more decisively than he otherwise could, by giving the passages in which Britain is referred to side by side. It is difficult to estimate the full value of this volume for historical purposes.

was admiral of the fleet of galleys sent for the protection of Gaul, apparently from the northern sea-rovers, who had even then become troublesome. He took his marine force into his own hands, concentrating it round him on the coast of Britain, and setting up there as Cæsar. He held independent rule for about eight years, when Allectus killed him, and became his successor as emperor within Britain. Two years afterwards, Constantius Chlorus, representing the central government, recovered the province of Britain to the empire. The Roman world was then undergoing the great disunion which gave to subsequent history the Empire of the East and the Empire of the West. The latter fell to Constantius, who kept the seat of his government mainly in Britain. He had the reputation of strictly maintaining authority within the fully annexed territories; while Eumenius, the panegyrist, tell us in his inflated periods, that the emperor disdained to admit the forests and marshes of the Caledonians and other Picti within the boundaries of the empire. A convenient form of speech was then coming into use. It spoke of the whole world as the inheritance of the empire. There were portions of territory, however, not admitted to the privileges of imperial rule; there were others, again, so remote and savage that it was not etiquette for the imperial authorities to know anything about their geographical conditions, or the people who lived in them.

About this period scraps from the ecclesiastical historians, or the works of the fathers of the Christian Church, meet those dropped from the later of the heathen classic writers. The great event of the imperial adoption of Christianity by Constantine bears date

in 313. He is spoken of as a conqueror of Britain, but this must refer to the acceptance there of his claims to the purple, and of the policy which he pursued. The troops stationed in Britain were the earliest to back his claims, and when the ecclesiastical historians record the triumphs which Christianity achieved under his rule, they repeatedly mention Britain as specially distinguished by a speedy adoption of the truth. That record of the early councils of the Church which has got currency as the most authentic, states that in the Synod of Arles, which sat in 314, there were present the Bishops of London and York, with certain British clerks.[1] Representatives from Britain are also recorded as present at the Council of Sardica, in 347.[2] These are but vague and unsatisfactory hints, but there is little more to be got. Of all the annalists of a later date who go back to the period of Roman Britain, Bede is the most to be depended upon, and by him we are in few words told that Ninian was the apostle of the south of Scotland, and that he built a church for himself at the promontory of Whithorn in Galloway, the remains of which might be seen when Bede wrote, some two hundred and fifty years afterwards. He takes note that it was called Candida Casa, or the White House, because it was built of stone, a material which we shall find was not in common use until long afterwards, even for ecclesiastical edifices. On other authorities Ninian is said to have been by birth a Briton, and to have been ordained to his mission just at the close of the fourth century.[3]

In every effort to get at the facts through such

[1] Labbæi, Conc. ap. Monum. Hist., xcix. [2] Ibid., xcv.
[3] Mon. Hist., p. 176.

sources as these, there is a rather unequal struggle with the powerful and compact literary organisation to carry back into remote times the evidence that the Bishop of Rome exercised supreme authority over all the Christian Church. It would have gone far to clear up difficulties had testimonies to the presence of Christianity been found among the statuary or inscriptions belonging to the Roman period as conclusive as those extremely curious relics which speak to the homage offered by the legionaries to the deities or entities worshipped by the people of the country. But works which are both classical and Christian are not abundant anywhere, and their absence in Britain would have no weight against good affirmative evidence.[1]

Meanwhile the tide of conflict in Roman Britain had entirely changed. It was no longer the conquerors keeping in subjection the districts they had annexed, and striving for others, but a thoroughly Romanised province, with dangerous neighbours among the wild tribes around it left unsubdued. South Britain was a Roman province longer than the Britain of our own day has been a Protestant country, and the character of the people must have been thoroughly moulded by so protracted a political influence. Through the mists which conceal from us the details of events, we can yet see the large fact that the Romanised Britons were a debased and feeble people. Races moulded by the influence of others generally are so. The system of the empire was to place absolute trust in its wonderfully trained and organised military force. Here there were courage, frugality, and hardy training. Elsewhere the

[1] See this discussed by Mr Wright in 'The Celt, the Roman, and the Saxon,' chap. ix.

Epicurean principle prevailed, and the duty of life was to enjoy as much animal luxury as the human frame could absorb. The British seem to have provided valuable troops, though their fellow-countrymen were enervated and defenceless. The province of Britain supplied soldiers above the average proportion of its population, if we may judge from the frequency of their use. They were, however, entirely at the command of the empire, or of any of those adventurers, named Tyrants or otherwise, who held power for the time being. There was no military organisation for local self-defence. Embodied legions, as the provincial soldiers came at last to be, they were marched to the place where they were most needed, and far away there were contests more vital to the empire than any that could disturb this distant island. So difficult was it for them to return, that the fact has found its way into history—though only on the authority of the later annalists—that a large body of them settled in Gaul, where they founded the province now known as Bretagne.

The later history, therefore, of the Romanised Britons is a series of petitions and wailings for help, to which the empire occasionally responds by a sordid supply of legionary forces.

In the midst of so wide a field of contest as the overthrow of the mighty empire, the historians of the day could afford little attention for the special disturbances of a distant province. We have thus hardly any account of the details of the scuffle in so remote a corner, but that of the monkish annalists of a subsequent age. The earlier and more truthful of these give us merely an indistinct view of the independent tribes of Britain assailing the province from within, while the

coasts were swept by the pirate seamen of the north. Yielding, however, by degrees to the craving of their auditors for distinct narratives of valour and endurance, the annalists, as the lapse of time was making the affair ever more obscure and indistinct, were peopling the haze with real persons, who at last come forth in extreme prominence and distinctness. So we have the narratives to be afterwards dealt with, in which such persons as Arthur and Vortigern on the one side, are pitted against Hengist and Horsa on the other. There is just one contemporary writer who gives a name to the enemies with whom the Romanised Britons had to contend. This is Ammianus Marcellinus. He was a practical man, both as a statesman and a soldier, and his History contains internal evidence that he was in public life from the middle to very near the end of the fourth century. He tells us how the Emperor Julian, who had just acceded to the purple, being in Paris in the winter of 360, and perplexed by an accumulation of anxieties, heard, among other sinister rumours, how a host of the savage tribes of the Scots and Picts had wasted the portion of the province nearest to their own frontiers, and spread terror through other districts, already wearied by previous contests. It was determined to send over a special force for the protection of the province, to be generalled by Lupicinius, described as a good and experienced soldier, but otherwise as a supercilious coxcomb, frantic about theatricals, and renowned for his greed and credulity. He sailed from Boulogne, and, landing on the coast of Kent, marched to London.[1] But it was among the perplexities of the imperial government that any servant sent with a sufficient

[1] Am. Mar., xx. chap. i.

force to conquer such invaders would use it for his own purposes, and set up an independent empire. It seems to have been in jealousy lest he should imitate the projects of Carausius and several others, that Lupicinius was recalled before he had accomplished anything of moment.

Four years afterwards, the same author has to tell us, with emphatic brevity, that the Picts and Saxons, the Scots and the Attacots, vexed the Britons with continued harassings. Again coming across the topic —on which he promises to enlarge in a part of his History which has not been preserved—he notes in passing that the Picts were divided into two nations,—the Dicaledons and Vecturions; that the Attacotti were a warlike people, and the Scots were great wanderers, peopling the earth.[1] From his frequent reference to the Saxons in the context, it is clear that Ammianus does not bring in their name vaguely, and in any supposition that they, like the others in his list, inhabited any of the unannexed districts of the British Isles. The word was used to mean people from the continent of Europe, belonging to those northern Teutonic races by which England and Lowland Scotland were peopled. As we shall afterwards see, they had begun that system of forcible settlement by which they gradually filled the country. It would appear as if Carausius, Allectus, and others, who, in the service of the empire, set up independent rule in England, cultivated the wild strangers who flocked into the province, as men whose

[1] "Picti Saxonesque et Scoti et Attacotti, Britannos ærumnis vexavere continuis" (xxvi. 4). "Illud tamen sufficiet dici, quod eo tempore, Picti in duas gentes divisi, Dicalidonas et Vecturiones, itidemque Attacotti, bellicosa hominum natio, et Scotti per diversa vagantes multa populabuntur" (xxvii. 8).

warlike prowess might be made available for their purposes. We hear of them, on the defeat of Allectus, endeavouring to plunder London.

They thus knew their way to a desirable scene of plunder. London was now a long-established, affluent city; and there, at the time referred to by Ammianus, we find the mixed hordes, named, perhaps without exact discrimination, as Picts, Scots, and Saxons, with their hands full. They had slain two distinguished Roman officers; and done many other flagrant deeds of violence, when it was resolved to take strong steps for the security of the province. Theodosius, called the Elder—the father of the Emperor Theodosius—was sent over to Britain at the head of a large force. He fell on the marauders in London, where they had not only piled up a heap of movable booty for removal to their own wilds, but had taken captive a number of Roman British, whom they would have taken with them as slaves had not succour arrived. Theodosius fought battle after battle, until he had driven the marauders out of the Roman province, and then began, as we are told, to rebuild the cities and forts which had been destroyed, or had decayed. He concluded his expedition by restoring the province between the two walls, and it had the distinction of receiving as a triumphal memorial the name of Valentia, after that of the Emperor Valens.[1]

So the Roman empire in Britain appeared to be restored to its old boundary of the Forth and the Clyde. The restoration, we may be sure, was a very brief one. We hear no more of the province from the old historians, who keep up, in a monotonous repetition of the

[1] Ibid., xxviii. ch. 2 and 3.

same general terms, the story of the ceaseless sufferings of the Roman Britons from their fierce neighbours. Yet there were at that time events in Britain which, in an age of less universal stir, might have been worthy of history. Then it was that another adventurer, Maximus, acquired by his local influence so much power that he carried a large army from Britain to Italy, and all but succeeded in making himself Cæsar. This removal of the army left the province more helpless than ever; and, in deference to the wailing supplication carried by British ambassadors or messengers to the imperial throne, the great Stilicho sent one legion to help them. This manifestly insufficient force must have increased, since the army was again strong enough to make local emperors, and successively set up Marcus, Gratian, and Constantine. This last is said to have been a man of humble condition, but to have been selected because he bore the name of the Great Constantine. However it was done, he made for himself a solid local power; and had his ambition been moderate, he might have changed the face of history by founding a separate British monarchy. He grasped at universal empire, however, and, like the others, took his troops across the Channel for foreign conquest, leaving the province again undefended. This occurred about the year 407. Thenceforward the Imperial Government had little to do with any part of Britain, and nothing with Scotland; and it was in 410 that Honorius wrote his celebrated letter to the cities of Britain, telling them that in future they must look to themselves for protection.

CHAPTER II.

The Roman Period.

(Continued.)

VESTIGES OF THE EMPIRE: POPULAR RESPECT FOR THEM—RELICS OF ART AND REFINEMENT—RELICS OF DOMESTIC LUXURY—ARTHUR'S OON—A ROMAN TOWN IN SCOTLAND—MONEY—ROMAN TOPOGRAPHY—RICHARD OF CIRENCESTER—ROMAN WARFARE—THE STRUGGLE WITH THE NATIVES—NATURE OF ROMAN ANNEXATION—QUESTION AS TO VESTIGES OF CHRISTIANITY—LEGENDS—ST PATRICK—ROMAN CAMPS: THEIR ABUNDANCE IN SCOTLAND—THE SEASONS—ROMAN ENCAMPING—ROMAN ROADS.

SINCE the written annals of the sojourn of the Romans in Scotland are so brief and fragmentary, let us try what testimony of their actions and social condition may be afforded by any remains of their labours and possessions unconsciously left by them. Though these vestiges are scanty in comparison with the rich collections made nearer to the seat of empire, they have been pretty carefully treasured. With one flagrant exception, the people of Scotland, high and low, have treated the known relics of the empire with a kind of reverential enthusiasm. Every peasant knows "the Roman camp" or "the Roman road" that distinguishes his district. Some relics more easily destructible have been preserved for a length of time,

which would make them antiquities from the period of their discovery.[1]

There was nothing in the shadowy history of the Roman occupation to convey such recollections of defeat or oppression as might excite national indignation or humiliation. All was far distant from the living or traditional grievances and hostilities of the people, who, indeed, held themselves to be a different race from those over whom the strangers held rule. It was in some measure through a cultivated interest in the progress of the mighty empire that these relics were venerated, but a good deal was also due to their excellence as works of art. It was natural, perhaps, that a progressive people should have an enthusiastic admiration for these testimonies to a civilisation much higher than their own. It must have been in some respects a mortifying homage, yet infinitely more dignified and hopeful for the future, than the stolid barbarism that in other races doomed the relics of departed art to demolition or degrading use.

One curious form taken by this appreciation of old art is in the use of intaglios to make up ecclesiastical seals. We see from the impressions that into the matrix of the seal some gem of this sort has been in-

[1] The excavation, for instance, of the remains of some Roman houses near Musselburgh in Queen Mary's reign, made a sensation even in the midst of the wild events of that short reign. In the Treasury accounts for the year 1565 there is an entry of the payment to a special messenger, "direct to the Baillies of Musselburgh, charging thame to tak diligent heid and attendance, that the monument of grit antiquitie now founden be not demolisit nor broken doun." The matter was so much talked of that Randolph, the English ambassador, in the midst of the grave events he had then continually to announce, mentions this discovery in a letter to Cecil, and as an affair of public moment in Edinburgh.

serted. It is utterly incongruous with the florid Gothic of the work by which it is surrounded; yet the artist of the seal recognised in it something far transcending the skill of his own hand, and put it to the most dignified use at his disposal.

Articles of this sort, small and precious, easily shift from place to place. A travelling or foreign clergyman may have brought home from France or Italy any of the gems which have decorated the ecclesiastical seal, and we are not of necessity to infer that these were among the trinkets in the possession of occupants of Roman Scotland.[1] Several pieces of sculpture, altars, and inscriptions undoubtedly found in Scotland were preserved as architectural ornaments in buildings, sometimes of the humblest order. There they have been discovered by the several archæologists who have made it their business to search for the relics of the Roman sojourn in Scotland.[2] Until very recently a stranger sauntering down the High Street of Edinburgh might have

[1] One of the most remarkable instances of travelled valuables is the quantity of Chinese seals found in Ireland. For a full account of them and their finding, see Notices of Chinese Seals found in Ireland, by Edmond Getty, M.R.I.A. Dublin: 1850: 4to.

[2] Buchanan and the older historians mention the more remarkable of the Roman remains extant in their day. Camden gave a more special account of them. A book, very attractive to antiquaries, as the journal of a continuous search after Roman remains, is the Itinerarium Septentrionale; or, a Journey through most of the Counties of Scotland, and those in the North of England, by Alexander Gordon, A.M., published in 1726. This is the identical lank folio which occupied the attention of Scott's Antiquary, and opened that acquaintance with the stranger Lovel which was to lead to so many results. The ground has been gone over more or less by Pennant, Roy, and Chalmers. A popular digest of this branch of Scottish topography will be found in 'Caledonia Romana: a Descriptive Account of the Roman Antiquities in Scotland, by the late Robert Stuart:' 1852: 4to. The same matter, in a more condensed shape, will be found in Dr Wilson's Prehistoric Annals of Scotland.

observed with curiosity, built into the face of one of the old houses there, two heads, male and female, sculptured in medallion of rather high relief. They are very fine works of art, and they have an air that at once stamps them as classical, without leaving ground for doubt. They have been pronounced to be likenesses of the Emperor Septimus Severus and his wife Julia.[1]

It is from such testimonies of high art, and also from the appliances of luxury found among the Roman relics, that we can in some measure infer the rank of civilised refinement reached by Roman Scotland. Very few other specimens reach nearly the level of these sculptured heads. There is, however, in the Hunterian Museum of Glasgow a bronze flagon of the pure egg-shape, with the inward-curved neck. It has a handle covered with symbolic sculpture, representing Mercury in one compartment and Minerva in another, in work which harmonises with the beautiful form of the vessel. It is clear that the owner of such a household article must have lived wealthily, and among people who valued high art.[2]

Several fragments of earthenware have been picked up. In themselves they are mere potsherds of the

[1] In the old house which they ornamented there stood between them a Gothic inscription, and the whole produced the impression as if the heads and the inscription had been together preserved from among the stones of some ruined ecclesiastical edifice. If this be so, the classic heathen sculpture with which the Gothic architect decorated his building had been piously preserved, when all that symbolised the Christian rites for which the building was raised had been lost or destroyed.

[2] The discovery of this antiquity is quite an archæological romance. In the parish of Lesmahago, in Lanarkshire, the natives were familiar with a convenient round stepping-stone which helped them to cross a burn. A curious phenomenon occurred—the stone became indented, and, on examination, presented the appearance of a hollow piece of oval metal. It was taken up, and found to be what is above described.

most worthless aspect, yet, on close examination, they have been treasured for symmetry of form or beauty of decoration as precious relics of Roman art. Two pieces of whitish matter, hollowed out, were found near the northern wall. When cleaned and put together it was found that the one made the base, the other the cup, of a tazza cut in white alabaster. It is too much corroded to let us see how its surface may have been decorated, but its form is fine, and it is above the average size of such ornaments in the present day. The stone it is cut out of could not have been found in Britain, or probably nearer than Italy.[1]

The pieces of Roman sculpture found in Scotland between the walls number from thirty to forty. They are of various merits in art, but the greater part of them are more ambitious than successful, and have the aspect which one might expect to find in the efforts of colonists to possess something as like as may be to the amenities left behind in the mother country. Altars and votive slabs abound, with inscriptions of many kinds, among which, as in the brighter countries of the Roman dominion, one may occasionally find a few tender words commemorating sorrow for the departed, engraved on a monumental stone.[2]

The great glory of the Roman remains in Scotland was, however, Arthur's Oon, or Arthur's Oven, in Stirlingshire, on the banks of the small river Carron, near

[1] It is among the Roman relics in the Scottish Antiquarian Museum.

[2] It is stated by Hector Boece that Edward I. destroyed as many Roman monuments in Scotland as he could lay his hands on. This can only be held as an authority for the esteem in which all such relics were held in Hector's day. The Scots were ever prone to the tradition that whatever they themselves most valued as objects of national pride and interest became the prey of the Norman invader.

the present town of Falkirk.[1] Gordon has fortunately left an exact portrait and description of this lost treasure. It was a perfect dome, with a circular orifice at its apex, built in double courses of finely-hewn stones, laid on each other without mortar. It was small to have been so famous—twenty-one feet high, and twenty-eight in external diameter. Its purpose is not plain. It has been compared to the Pantheon in form; but the different sizes of the buildings carry them out of a common character, and there is no known Roman edifice of the same form approaching Arthur's Oon in dimensions. Perhaps it was a tomb, for the Romans were extravagant and capricious in their memorials to their dead. Through all this dubiety, when we know the history of the spot where it stood, and of the rise of structural skill in Scotland, there can scarcely be a doubt that it was built by the Romans.[2]

That the old chroniclers distinctly say it was so, will add nothing to the strength of this conviction, but they are a testimony to the renown of the building as a national specialty of Scotland. Nennius, who has little else to say about Scotland, identifies it distinctly, and says it was built by Carausius when he established

[1] Diodorus Siculus is supposed to have alluded to Arthur's Oon when he tells us how the Hyperboreans—a people who had the sagacity to take up a comfortable residence at the back of the north wind—have a fine round temple dedicated to the worship of Apollo. Stonehenge, however, on behalf of the Druids, claims more loudly the advantage of this announcement.

[2] It might be argued against this conclusion, that although the greatest relic of Roman inhabitancy, it stood north of the northern wall, where Roman remains are scant. The considerable tower at Camelon, however, also stood north of the wall, and both were close beside it. Whatever specialties may have brought the wall just south of the two, we must consider them, for reasons to be afterwards given, as virtually within the Roman province.

an empire in Britain.[1] Hector Boece enlarges on it. He speaks of its having a tesselated pavement, an altar, and a sculptured Roman eagle, somewhat defaced by time; and master of the fabulous as he was, and preposterously as he attributes the monument to Julius Cæsar, one might expect him to speak truth in a matter on which eyewitnesses could contradict him.[2] The other historians of Scotland pay it like attention, and it has been profusely commented on by the topographical antiquaries. It might be supposed that a monument so illustrious was safe in the protection of its eminence, unless some very strong motive should contend against its existence. It was, however, taken to pieces about the middle of last century, for no more strenuous reason than because its finely-dressed stones served a sordid laird for lining a mill-dam. The loud and long-continued blast of execration which followed this deed proves, even more strongly than the preservation of other monuments, how highly the people esteemed the relics of the Romans.[3]

The remains of Roman dwelling-houses and other merely useful buildings are not nearly so common, even in the south of Scotland, as in the other provinces. There is not one specimen of the beautifully tesselated floorings found in the south of England, where they testify to a people living in luxurious elegance. None of these have been found in the remains near the southern wall, speaking as these otherwise do of affluence. Per-

[1] "Domum rotundam politis lapidibus super ripam fluminis Carun . . . . construxit."—c. xix.

[2] Edit. 1574, p. 34.

[3] The author remembers its being brought, with perhaps some more effective arguments, against a candidate for the representation of a Scotch county, that he was a descendant of the destroyer of Arthur's Oon.

haps this fragile work was inconsistent with the method of warming the dwellings three or four hundred miles farther off from Italy and from the sun. Some remains have led people to suppose that the luxury of the warm bath must have been largely enjoyed by the Romans in Scotland. Along the line of both walls and elsewhere there have been found hypocausts or stoves. These consist of a flooring of stone or brick, with another like flooring three or four feet above, supported by pillars, round or square. In the chamber thus formed fires were burned, and proper provision was of course made for the entrance of air and the escape of smoke. Above such a chamber the bath and the adjoining sudatory might be kept at the proper heat.

Among the Roman remains found on the banks of the Esk, near Musselburgh, those of hypocausts seemed so extensive as to suggest that they heated the public baths of some large town; and the phenomenon was the more remarkable, as the baths found in England were generally small tanks, capable of containing little more than the bather, and had a small flue beneath. It was only in the Gallic provinces, or Italy itself, that bathing appliances on the Inveresk scale were to be found. This naturally leads to the question, whether in Scotland, or along the southern wall, these hypocausts were used for baths, and whether they did not rather show that the Romans, who had a thoroughly practical eye for comforts and luxuries, applied the apparatus which had been used at home for heating the bath to the purpose of warming their ordinary chambers? The great difference in climate between Italy and Scotland was a matter that had to be provided for; and certainly a moderate heat, radiating

from the floor, would be a not disagreeable way of warming a room, while it would admit of the freshening of the air above to any desired extent.[1]

Trifling articles for use or ornament often show how far a people have risen in civilisation, but they are a capricious testimony. They even form a stock of evidence very liable to be extinguished altogether, without leaving a trace; and when they are but rare, it is a question—as we have seen in the matter of the intaglios—how they came to the place where they are seen. Fortunately there exist some specimens of work which at once profess themselves to be Roman, while they come to notice with an authentic record of their disinterment from the earth, which had to all appearance encased them since the time when their owners ceased to use them. A patera and a few bronze fragments in the Antiquarian Museum of Edinburgh almost rival the work of the celebrated Cambuslang flagon. A good many terra-cotta candelabra or lamps have been found, of that peculiar form which has, in a manner, become canonical through its matchless grace and simplicity, and has hence, ever since it existed in its purity, been contorted into ornamental service. Fragments of pottery, some of them of the fine red Samian ware, have been preserved, but, from all accounts, in

[1] A fragment—the only remaining one, it is believed—of the hypocaust at Inveresk may be seen under the colonnade in front of the Royal Institution in Edinburgh. It is surely curious to see in this accessible spot, yet so near its natural place, a specimen of the way in which the Roman officer, civil or military, made himself comfortable in Scotland. It is a slab of stone, covered with a thick coat of concrete, and supported by three small pillars. Even what remains of stone and concrete makes a floor of about a foot's thickness. We cannot suppose heat sent through this sufficient to boil water, but it might easily have been so impregnated as to radiate a pleasant warmth.

small proportion to the quantity found and lost again. They afford traces of decoration sufficient to show an elevation in the ornamenting of common articles which the pottery of the present day is only now reaching, and that rather by slavish imitation than by original development. The Roman makers seem to have profusely advertised themselves by putting their stamp on their wares, and these stamps have been found in sufficient numbers to supply a tolerable list of the manufacturers whose goods took with the Scots market in the Roman age.

This leads to some petty articles of a very curious and suggestive kind that have been discovered in Scotland. They are the stamps themselves, or the matrices with which impressions were made, whether on pottery or other articles. The inscription is in these, of course, inverted, in order that the counterpart may be read from left to right, after the manner of European writing. Some of these are incised or cut in for the purpose of producing an elevated impression; others are in relief, for the purpose of producing an indented impression. It is the strange specialty of these matrices or dies that their makers seem only to have expected them to leave an imprint on any soft matter on which they were pressed. Had they known that any coloured liquid laid on the raised surfaces of the letters might be left, retaining the form of these letters on any flat surface or fabric, they would have gone as far as the first block-printers in achieving for the old world the greatest inventive triumph of the new. In the presses of our museums, besides the stamps themselves, an impression from them, printed on paper, may sometimes be seen; and, as if to taunt the Roman

die-cutter, the effect is shown of the one little step into a great discovery which he failed to take. One of these stamps is significant, as telling us how a practice of the Roman medical school had extended, along with other elements of civilisation, to the Lothians. It is a small bar of trapstone, with a raised inscription on each of the two sides. One of them relates to certain "euodes"—a term known in ancient pharmacy, for the cure of "cicatrices" and "aspritudines," whatever these words may have meant in that day. The other relates to a preparation of saffron for disease of the eyes. Both these patent medicines, as we may call them, were the property of a certain Lucius Vallatinus; and as he prepared each, he would stamp the case containing it with its appropriate name. This valuable little stone was found among tiles, brick-dust, and other Roman rubbish, at Tranent, not far from the Roman buildings excavated on the banks of the Esk. Had the cases of medicine with the stamps on them been found, they might have left a doubt whether the palliatives were made on the spot, or brought from some place nearer the centre of the empire. But the finding of the original stamp shows us that Lucius Vallatinus prepared his medicines in Scotland, and probably practised as a medical man in the neighbourhood of Tranent.[1] Glass vessels have been found among less distinguishable fragments of Roman industry. They are small, as, indeed, almost all old specimens of Roman glass-work are, and generally look like lachrymatories, or phials for containing the tears of the mourners for the dead. To lay in a stock of them on the occasion of a death seems to have become a sort

[1] See Wilson's Prehistoric Annals, ii. 66.

of funeral ceremonial, which has been so prevalent as to leave its vestiges in this distant corner of the empire. A few cooking utensils, generally of bronze, have been unearthed. They are thoroughly serviceable-looking articles, characteristic of the completeness with which the Romans did all their work.

To complete this list of significant trifles, it has to be recorded that a few brooches, rings, and other personal ornaments have been brought to light, which at once prove their origin, even though of the common metals, by the simple beauty of their forms, and a character in this beauty which renders them entirely distinct from the multitude of artistic efforts of the northern nations which our soil has yielded up. As we have seen, the pieces of Roman sculpture found in Scotland are not all specimens of high art. But the collection of household trifles, small as it is, is true to that genius for beautiful forms which the present age is with some earnestness, and about as much success, trying to rival. The inference is natural. The stone sculpture was such as could be produced in the province —the smaller articles were imported from places of manufacture nearer to the centre of the empire.

Coined money forms a very powerful element in historical testimony, but it must be considerately employed, otherwise it may mislead. For a reason too palpable to require repetition, no other article made by human hands has such a tendency to wander over the earth. A single coin tells much more by the image and superscription it bears than from the place where it is found. It goes for little that a Roman denarius is picked up somewhere in the far north of Scotland.[1]

[1] "When the streets of Forres were repaired, about fifty years ago,

But the existence of a coin of that Carausius who set up empire in this country, proves that he had in Britain an establishment so important as a mint. Where also coins are found in large quantities, they tell their story of the district where they have been concealed. Though the most liable of all ancient relics to be intercepted and turned to base purposes in their way to the hands of the adept, yet there has been secured a sufficient quantity of Roman money, certainly found in Scotland, to make an impression as to the extent of the Roman hold on the country between the walls. The coinage of Antonine, in whose reign the northern wall was built, naturally predominates; but we hear of hoards in which the money of emperors earlier than the invasion of Agricola is mixed up with coins of the second and of the third century.[1]

several Roman coins were discovered under the pavement. . . . In 1843 a copper coin of the Emperor Titus was found near Sueno's Pillar, in the vicinity of Forres. It bears the well-known reverse of a female mourning under a palm-tree, with the motto *Judea Capta*."—Stuart's Caledonia Romana, 213.

[1] Of the coins found at Cramond, on the south side of the Forth, Gordon says—"Among the great number of *Roman* coins found at this station of *Cramond*, Baron Clark has about forty or fifty very curious ones; and among others, a large brass coin of the Emperor *Claudius*, which seems to be rather a medallion. On one side is the head of the emperor, with these letters, very fair, TICLAVDIUS CAESAR AVG. P. M. T. R. P. IMP. On the reverse is S. C., then NERO CLAVDIVS DRVSVS, with the figure of one on horseback, upon a triumphal arch, between two *Vexilla*. As I copied it from the original, I have exhibited the draught of this in my plate of medals and intaglios.

"At this place was found a well-preserved gold medal of *Antoninus Pius* [now in the custody of the same baron], as is also that invaluable medal of *Severus*, supposed to be coined on the peace with the *Caledonians;* the others, dug up at this station, in the baron's collection, are one of *C. Augustus, Divi Filius*—reverse *Pon-Max;* five of *Trajan*, five of *Hadrian*, two of *Vespasian*, two of *Nerva*, two of *Antoninus Pius*, one of *Galba*, one of *Nero*, one of *Julia*, one of *Domitian;* another of *Severus*, with this reverse, *Felicitas Augustorum;* one of *Octavianus*

It is from the buildings and movables thus left, and from the camps and roads, of which hereafter, that we can make up anything of the geography of Roman Scotland, rather than from books. The book known as the 'Itinerary of Antoninus,' the most distinct topography of the empire which we have from a contemporary source, brings up the roads, towns, and stations to the southern rampart from the Solway to the Tyne, and stops there as abruptly as any modern map does at the boundary of the territory to which it applies. It is from that source that the topography of Roman England has been best supplied, and it must be inferred, that while the author of the Itinerary, whoever he was, was at work on it, the southern wall was the boundary of the empire in Britain.[1] For the geography of Roman Scotland, therefore, inquirers had little further resource than the works of the great geographer Ptolemy of Alexandria, who, with so large an affair in hand as the arrangement of the whole surface of the globe, and its adjustment to the heavenly bodies, laid down the only available landmarks for working out the topography of this country. They were naturally indistinct, and gave opportunity for a

Augustus; one of *Claudius;* one of *Antoninus Augustus,* which I take to be *Caracalla;* another of the same, with this reverse, *Moneta Augusti;* another of *Antoninus,* without a beard—the reverse, two hands joining. There are besides six consular medals."—Itin., p. 116.

[1] That it should fail to reach the wall of Antonine should be a sufficient evidence for counting that it was not, as it is usually said to be, a work executed by the direction of that emperor. But besides this omission of the great triumph of the emperor whose name it bears, it contains names which did not exist until the reigns of succeeding emperors, and has been thus traced as far down as the reign of Diocletian, more than a century later than Antoninus. Some have thrown out a conjecture that this work was originally of so early a date as Julius Cæsar, and that it was altered from time to time with the enlargement of the empire.

good deal of criticism and conjecture. In fact, so fundamentally was our poor country distorted, that in the Ptolemian maps it stands at right angles to England, striking eastward into the German Ocean, so as almost to abut upon Norway. It has been supposed that this was not the arrangement of the great geographer himself, but the doing of some blundering manipulist, who, finding the map divided into two sheets, put them together with a twist. Those who tried to adjust the names on the distorted map by latitude and longitude, and to find their representatives at the present day, had thus a special difficulty to meet besides the scantiness and obscurity of the hints afforded by the old names.

When the revelation from Richard of Cirencester burst upon the astonished and delighted antiquarian world, all these painful efforts after poor results seemed at an end. A rich harvest of knowledge was poured plentifully forth. There was only sufficient difficulty in collecting it to give a zest to the pursuit. The fabricator had ingenuity enough not to depart too far from the leading features of the Ptolemian maps, nor to approach too closely to the modern names of places when laying down those by which they were known to the Romans. There was thus opened a varied and exciting field of criticism, ever productive of satisfactory results, for Richard of Cirencester afforded materials for crowding the map of Scotland from the Novantum Chersonesus, or the Rinns of Galloway, to the Virvedrum Promontorium, characterised as Caledoniæ Extrema, and now known as Duncansbay Head.[1]

[1] The author admits that in earlier days he was an implicit believer in the little book called Ricardi Monachi de Situ Britanniæ, and that he

The Roman roads in Britain, with the cities and stations passed by them, were laid down by Richard with the precision of a modern road-book, and it was the work of the antiquaries to identify them, and put the modern names beside the ancient. To accomplish this some wonderful feats in the science of etymology were performed, and the few conspicuous places fixed down by the old commentators on Ptolemy were remorselessly shifted. It may suffice, as a specimen, to mention that the great station, presumed also to be a

zealously absorbed the mass of critical literature which it brought after it. The lapse of a quarter of a century brought a change like the proverbial dispersal of the delusions of youth. Some doubts had, in the mean time, been partially heard and little heeded. The book, was still referred to as an unquestionable authority — probably by authors who did not go to itself, but took its teaching as diffused through the wisdom of its ponderous commentators. Nay, within a few years an edition of the work has appeared, edited by a man of some name in antiquarian literature, who does not hint that there is a single breath against its fair fame. It was almost astounding to return back to the old studies with some oppressive notions of the difficulty of disentangling all the perplexities and obscurities, and presenting a fair tangible outline to the common reading world, to find that the whole had dissolved into fable-land like the baseless fabric of a vision. The effect was that relief tinged with disappointment which attends on the sudden discovery that an arduous and anxious task, for which one has braced and prepared himself, has been rendered unnecessary. Reference is already made to the distinguished body of disciples who supported the false prophet (p. 14). In fact, the attempt was skilfully worked up to suit certain prevailing opinions of the day when it appeared; and what made it all the more acceptable then, has provided the means of detection now. A very patriotic Scotsman might be expected to exult in seeing Richard of Cirencester swept from historical literature, since he represents Scotland as subdued and divided into provinces as far as Inverness, where he planted a municipium. It is an instance of the feeling already referred to about the Roman invasion, that, far from wishing to repudiate this new chapter in history, the most zealous Scottish antiquaries welcomed with delight the addition of the territories north of the Tay to the Roman acquisitions. Since this was written, two articles have appeared in the Gentleman's Magazine (March and May 1866), in which there is a critical exposure of some of the details of the fabrication, following up a hint by Herr Wex.—See above, p. 4.

considerable city, called the Winged Camp, which had been identified with modern Edinburgh, was carried off and set down at Burghead, on the Moray Firth. It came happily to aid this theory, that a large square-shaped chamber was found there, cut into the solid rock, and was identified with the higher order of Roman baths. But most conclusive of all—the Winged Camp was called by the old geographer Pteroton, and behold one of the old customary names of Burghead was Torrytoun.[1]

[1] "According to the Survey of Moray, published by the Rev. John Grant of Elgin in 1798, the ancient name of the village, without the fortification, was Torry or Torrytoun, a name so much resembling the Pteroton of Richard" (Observations upon the Progress of the Roman Arms in Scotland, Trans. Ant. Soc., vol. ii. 309). The Pteroton is from Ptolemy's translation of Castra Allata, or Winged Camp, into Greek, Πτερωτον Στρατοπεδον. So we must suppose, either that the Greeks took the word πτερωτον, with its roots and branches, from Morayshire, or that the inhabitants of the sea-coast of that northern district exchanged whatever may have been the original name of their headland for the translation which the Alexandrian geographer made of the Latin name into his own Greek. This etymological feat is the work of a professor of Greek, who must have forgotten that there were enthusiasts in northern etymology who would have determinedly claimed the characteristic name Torrytoun as of native growth. The discovery of the Roman bath is described by the same author:—"In addition likewise to all this, while some gentlemen of the vicinity, having made a purchase of the property with a view of improving the harbour, and enlarging the village for the purposes of trade, were employing labourers to clear away the rubbish of the old buildings, &c., about 1807 or 8, they discovered a stone stair of about thirty steps, leading down to a reservoir or cistern for water in the bottom of the rock. This, being cleared out and laid open, showed that it had been excavated to supply the inhabitants with water (there being no spring in the place), both by receiving the rain that fell from above, and likewise what might be filtered through the sandstone rock from below. Having descended to the bottom of the stair, it was found to end in a chamber with water in it, of about ten or twelve feet square, having its sides, for six or eight feet upwards, covered with a coating of fine plaster, and niches in the angles, seemingly intended for statues. This could only have been the work of the Romans; and the short history of this place seems to be, that after having been abandoned by that

We are driven at last from books and maps to find the chief settlements of the Romans on the spots where those relics of their sojourn already referred to have been found. Among these Edinburgh is conspicuous, both for the smaller vestiges of Roman presence and the convergence of roads. Birrens, on the western border, was another seemingly populous settlement; whether or not, as many competent antiquaries suppose, it was the place called Blatum Bulgum by the Romans. Other places conspicuous from the vestiges of

people, the natives had burned their habitations, and the Danes or Norwegians, finding it an excellent situation for protecting them in their piratical depredations, had constructed the present rampart of all the heterogeneous materials which were left."—Transactions of the Society of the Antiquaries of Scotland, vol. ii. part ii. p. 310.

The present author saw this curious work before the fortifications round it had been so entirely demolished as they now are. These banks were rough and shapeless, anything but Roman in their character, and according better with the supposition that the place had been fortified in rough ways at different periods, sometimes against and sometimes by the Norse invaders. In volume iv. of the Proceedings of the Antiquarian Society of Scotland will be found Historical Notices of the Broch, or Burghead, in Moray, with an Account of its Antiquities, by James Macdonald, A.M., Elgin. This embodies the result of such investigations as could be conducted where a new town covers the site of the fortress. Many curious relics, such as specimens of the sculptured stones, to be afterwards considered, were revealed, but nothing to show Roman inhabitancy. "The coating of fine plaster" in the bath is found to be an alga adhering to the wall. On entering the well, for such it seems to have been, one is struck with its resemblance to a Roman bath; but great part of this feeling is due to the doorway, and the chamber itself, having been arched over since the discovery. In fact, in its present state it proves rather too much. It is like the large receptacle that would be made for cool bathing in a hot climate. Even in the south of England the Roman baths are small, and made to be warmed. Here would be, in the bleak north, a large subterranean tank of fresh water close to the edge of the sea. Even if it were probable that the Romans had a fort or camp there, it is not the spot where they would require to carry out a considerable work for the purpose of obtaining, by artificial means, the refreshing coolness which the climate did not supply.

a populous residency are Cramond, where the small river Almond empties into the Firth of Forth, and Inveresk, near Musselburgh, where, in the walls near the church, there are many stones with the marks of the Roman chisel.[1] We have seen already the peculiarity that a Roman town—Camelon, near Falkirk—seems to have been, along with the work called Arthur's Oon, built just outside the northern wall. It is in the very centre of the modern traffic of Scotland, where roads, canals, railways, ironworks, and other busy operations have nearly obliterated the traces of ancient inhabitancy which it retained a hundred and fifty years ago.[2] That it stood outside the wall, in the

[1] When the fences called "dry-stone dykes" in Scotland—walls made of the undressed stones as they are quarried or picked up—are largely built of finely-squared blocks, the inference is that these have been taken from older buildings demolished. Such stones—very convenient to the builder—are to be found abundantly in the field-fences along the district penetrated by the northern wall, and there are several in the rubble walls near the church of Inveresk. In both, however, there are stones which bear a special peculiarity of the Roman chisel. A block of freestone is squared by driving the chisel across its surface in parallel grooves. If the stone is not to be absolutely smoothed, these remain. In general, they make a narrow fluting, imperceptible at a distance. The Romans, however, cut them deep and broad. Sometimes they are seen in parallel lines, horizontal or perpendicular. But sometimes, also, the grooves cross each other at right angles, making facets in rows, either horizontal or diagonal; in other instances the direction of the grooves is alternated, or otherwise varied. Such grooves have sometimes the appearance of being intended for rude decoration, and indeed it seems likely that the hewer sometimes amused himself in his monotonous labour by thus leaving the mark of his chisel very prominent. An extraordinary collection of these marked stones may be seen—but only by candle-light—in the strange crypt of the church of Hexham, in Northumberland. The interior, indeed, is almost entirely faced with them, and it is impossible to doubt that they were selected as being in some way ornamental. Whoever has not noticed stones of this class may form a notion of them from a cut of part of this crypt in Bruce's Roman Wall, p. 314.

[2] A few years ago the author happened to be present at an excavation here, conducted by Professor Sir J. Y. Simpson, of whom it is not so

territory of the wild Caledonians, has been thought a perplexing fact. We are not, however, to consider that these Roman barriers were like gārden-walls, protecting only the property inside. They were a mere help to support Roman influence and Roman protection in their neighbourhood. Camelon might have its share in the system of fortresses which aided the wall; and from the account given by Gordon of neighbouring ruins now obliterated, we may infer that the town was plentifully surrounded by defensive works.[1]

widely known over the world as his other services to mankind, that he has done much to give an impulse to archæological science. A sewer was opened and traced some distance. Pieces of glass and pottery, partly of Samian ware, were found in it. A citizen of Falkirk who was present, said he wished that town had as good a sewer.

[1] "I saw a place called the Chesters, surrounded with a rampart of stone in an oval form, with an opening to the east leading into the area: it is very entire and well preserved. The breadth of the wall measured about 18 feet, and 7 or 8 of perpendicular height. Farther east, on a hill called the Forebrae, above the village of Auchincloich, I met with a very beautiful and curious castellum, called Cairnfaal; it has a stone wall round it, forming a complete circle, with eight or nine regular courses above one another, and about 12 feet high and 250 in circumference. A mile and a half farther east is another castellum, opposite to Castle Cary, upon the top of a round hill, and is called Bankier Castle, consisting of a large ditch and rampart, the latter of which is about 19 or 20 feet high and 350 in circumference—the ditch near 24 feet in breadth. . . . . From thence, going about a quarter of a mile farther east, I was surprised to find a large field crowded with what seemed to be the foundation and ruins of a large town called Easter Bankier. In the middle of these seeming ruins and marks of streets I found a square spot of ground surrounded with a large stone wall, the breadth of which was about 18 feet and 500 in circumference, with an entry likewise to the east. Within the area were sundry divisions, distinguished by rough stone walls . . . . A mile farther east, at a place called the Chapel Hill, I found another square spot of ground, surrounded with an agger, or rampart of stone and earth, about 200 feet in circumference, in the middle of which was the foundation of stone buildings. Eighty paces farther, I met with a round tumulus of simple stones, about 300 feet in circumference. When I had got to the top of it, I perceived a

The conclusion pointed to by all these remains, whether of movable commodities or stationary works, is, that considerable communities lived under the protection of the empire between the northern and the southern rampart. Of their government and constitution we can only form an estimate by looking to the

hollow descending from the rampart to a beautiful flat plain in the middle, and is within view of the ruins of East Bankier. Half a mile still farther east of the Chapel Hill is a place called Wester Coudon, a little above the Bridge of Bonny, southward. Here are indeed vast tracks of buildings and stone walls, whose foundations appear very distinct, covering a great many acres of ground, with two or three rows of terraces upon the declivity towards the north, faced with stone, the height of which I measured, being about 10 feet, and 15 and 18 in breadth. At this place there is a very extensive view of the isthmus, to the west, on which Antoninus's wall and Agricola's forts were placed; northward there is a view of the Firth of Forth, and stands in the very centre of the great valley already described. . . . . About two miles farther east of this place are to be seen the ruins of that old Roman town, called Camelon, or the supposed Guidi mentioned by Bede. That this town was Roman, is very evident from the noble Roman military Way which runs through it. Here both inscriptions and medals have been dug up: I myself saw two beautiful silver coins of Vespasian and Antoninus Pius, which are now in the hands of the present Countess of Kilmarnock."—Itinerarium, 22, 23.

The antiquary's attention is next drawn to two high and beautifully circular mounds called Dunipace Hills, close to these ruins, and to the site of Arthur's Oon. So placed and shaped in regular cones, as if by the hands of man, they have naturally been associated with the Roman occupancy. They are mentioned by all the old historians, and Buchanan supposed that their name is a corruption from Duni Pacis, or Hills of Peace, and that they were raised in commemoration of a peace negotiated between Donald I. on the part of the Caledonians, and the Emperor Severus on the part of the Romans, to whom also they served to mark the northern boundary of the empire. The Romans were not given, however, to the piling-up of earthen mounts, and these are enormous elevations, if we think of them as artificial. They are evidently residuary masses left by retreated waters, in which they have made shallows and islands. This will account for their form without the necessity of supposing that they were ever rounded by art. If analogy did not support this view, it would be strengthened by the incident of a third hill in the same place having been levelled, and showing complete internal evidence of natural formation.

system on which the empire organised its distant dependencies. The process of annexation to the empire was different from any process known in the present day among civilised nations. The most rapacious of what are called the robber powers are compelled by the exigencies of modern diplomacy to get up some decent vindication or excuse for seizing on the territory of a weaker power—they must condescend to pick a quarrel with it as a preliminary. With powerful constitutional states, the aggrandisement comes in the shape of inevitable necessity. A commercial treaty is perhaps the beginning, and a factory is established. The barbarians dislike this institution, and become troublesome; and then the factory bristles into a fort. Armed occupation produces heartburnings and contests, and the stronger the intruders become, the greater is the determination to force them out. But vested interests have taken root in the soil—these must be protected; and piece by piece a great territory is annexed.

The Roman system was much simpler. During the Consulate there was a rapacious enough spirit of acquisition abroad, but it had to bend to circumstances. Rome sometimes met a power so considerable that it could only be subjected to a nominal authority, or must be honoured with an equal alliance for the time being. But the days of these independencies had passed away ere the empire was yet old; and there was no power, unless North Germany was one, which could cope with the Roman army. Then came in the simple principle, that the whole world should be governed by one man. All who resisted this principle were put into the category of rebels, and so treated,

without any compunction or mercy. There was no genial humouring of the barbarian—no assimilation with his ways; he was to be at once beaten into submission, and the Roman armies never failed to go straight to this point.

When a tribe was subdued, however, there was an immediate reaction. It was now part of the holy Roman empire, and must have privileges according to its position in that grand hierarchy. The Roman municipal system broadened from the great centre till it embraced all the districts of the empire, however remote. The practice of creating these municipalities commenced during the Consulate. They were formed on the model of the great central municipality itself. They were consequently republican institutions, and so they continued to be after the establishment of the empire. There was a variety of these institutions, to suit population and other conditions. Six kinds have been enumerated: the municipium itself—the highest; the prefecture, the colonia, the forum, the conciliabulum, and the castellum. Our municipal corporations of the present day are all on the Roman model. It suited the political genius of the Anglo-Saxons so well that they at once adapted themselves to it. No modern corporations have, however, formed such a perfect hierarchy as those of Rome, where the smaller held by the greater, and all were at the command of one centre. In despotic countries the corporations have been undermined. In this country, though nominally the creatures of the Crown, they have become antagonistic to centralisation rather than promoters of it; for when Parliament became the governing body, the connection with the Crown became merely a

nominal distinction, and an aid to uniformity and the despatch of business. Some of the Continental municipalities near the centre of power—such as Florence, Marseilles, and Cologne—probably have enjoyed uninterrupted the corporate rights they held under the Cæsars. Tacitus mentions in a very natural way, how, when the Senate of Rome cherished a great draining project, the Florentines were heard on a complaint that it would flood the Arno and destroy their territory: it was just as a corporation might plead its interests at the present day before a committee of Parliament on some local bill. It is believed to have been from the remnants of the old municipal spirit, still alive in the provinces of Italy, that in the late political revolution there the fragments previously ruled by distinct governments came together with such marvellous alacrity, and formed themselves into a compact kingdom as harmonious and symmetrical as if it had never been broken up. We know that two towns in England were admitted to the rank of *municipia*—York and Verulam. London must have held considerable rank. When invaded by the Picts in the days of Gratian, it was spoken of as an ancient, famous city, sometimes called Augusta, sometimes Lundunum. It would be interesting could we find any evidence that in Britain the Roman municipality lived through the confusions that followed the removal of Roman protection, and so continued down to our own days as the Saxon corporations. Something more fleeting than such institutions has lived, in the Roman names of some of these places. Wherever the name ends in chester or cester — as Winchester, Manchester, and Cirencester—we must hold it as beyond doubt that

the name is inherited from the Romanised occupants, in whose hands it was a fortified town. In Scotland the term chester occurs in two places, where it is in the midst of Roman relics—in Roxburgh, beside the great north road of the Romans; and again near the town of Camelon, beside the northern wall, as already spoken of.

There is another matter on which it would be of still higher interest to have particulars about the Romanised communities in the south of Scotland—their religion. We do not know whether before the establishment of Christianity any of the inhabitants were so far Christians as to have been subjected to any of the great stated persecutions of the heathen emperors. The stories about such persecutions in England have not stood the test of criticism. In the reign of Constantine, Christianity became nominally the religion of the Roman province in Scotland. There is not, however, among the existing things, small or great, which testify to the sojourn of the Romans in the country, any one that can be pronounced a relic of their Christianity; and indeed, keeping in mind what has been said of Britain at large, no such relic was to be expected.[1] Ninian and his stone church in Galloway

[1] See above, page 40. Of the exception to the absence of Roman Christian relics in England, Mr Wright says:—"On the principal tesselated pavement in the Roman villa at Frampton in Dorsetshire, the Christian monogram (the X and P) is found in the midst of figures and emblems, all of which are purely Pagan. Lysons, who published an engraving of this pavement, attempted to explain this singular anomaly by supposing that the monogram of Christ had been added at a later period by a Christian who had become possessed of the old Pagan house. But there seems to have been no appearance in the work of the pavement that it had been a subsequent insertion, and it must be agreed that a Christian of this period was not likely to be so tolerant of heathenism as to place a Christian emblem among pictures and even inscriptions

have already been mentioned; but the Christianity which he represented was swept away, along with the Roman civilisation, between the time when he is said to have existed and the record of that existence in Bede's History. There is a gulf between the narrator and his facts; and it is only an exceptional respect for Bede, as an extremely honest narrator with a deep-sighted sagacity for scenting out historical truth, that will induce one in this instance to relax the usual canons of historical evidence, and believe that Bede had reason for what he says about St Ninian's ministration in Scotland. It is told in a couple of sentences, brought in parenthetically in his narrative of later events.[1] There is something equally tantalising in the story of St Patrick. If we had early authority for the events in his life, they would be quite credible, as in conformity with what we are taught about the conditions of a Christianised Roman province. We are told that he was born within Valentia, near the end of the northern wall.[2] His father was a decurio or magis-

relating to that profane mythology on which he was taught to look with horror, and which he could not for a moment misunderstand. I am inclined to think it more probable that the beautiful villa at Frampton had belonged to some wealthy proprietor, who possessed a taste for literature and philosophy, and, with a tolerant spirit which led him to seek to surround himself with the memorials of all systems, he had adopted among the rest that which he might learn from some of the imperial coins to be the emblem of Christ. Jesus, in his eyes, might stand on the same footing as Socrates or Pythagoras."—The Celt, the Roman, and the Saxon, p. 299.

[1] See above, page 40.

[2] The aim of the latest inquiry into his birthplace is to show that he was born at Desvers, near Boulogne.—"On the Birthplace of St Patrick," see 'Essays on Religion and Literature,' edited by H. E. Manning, D.D. It has of course been kept in view that in the parochial divisions a considerable district at the west end of the wall is still called Kil Patrick. Among the many small matters brought into the

trate. When sixteen years old he was carried off by some of the northern pirates, who even then began to infest the British coasts; and he was conveyed to Ireland, where he remembered the Christian lessons of his youth, and spread the faith. Nothing can be more consistent with the common accounts of the social and geographical conditions of Scotland and Ireland—a Roman province with civilisation and Christianity in the one, utter heathenism and natural barbarism in the other. The captive boy is, however, a slender foundation for that rapid mustering of Christian priests in Ireland, which swarmed over into Scotland, and beyond all question planted there what really became the Christian Church.[1] But it would be unreasonable to

discussion about the saint's birthplace, the author does not remember having noticed the following: In the first life in Colgan's collection it is said that Succat was the name first bestowed on St Patrick—"Succat nomen ei primo impositum erat"—on which there is a gloss by Colgan, "Succat est vox Britannica quæ Deus Belli, vel fortis, latine significatur." But Succot or Succoth is also the name of an estate in the district where he is reputed to have been born.—See Stat. Accot., "Parish of New Kilpatrick," 43.

[1] All the learning about St Patrick will be found condensed into Dr Todd's 'St Patrick, Apostle of Ireland, a Memoir of his Life and Mission.' The interest and value of this book are not in the apostle himself, but in the revelations of the nature of the early Irish Church, which the author profusely distributes. When dealing with the saint himself, indeed, the author seems to feel that he has not a full and satisfactory hold of a reality. The tenor of the archæological inquiries about this saint must indeed be rather alarming to those simple members of the old Church who would be content to take him with implicit faith from the Bollandists and Butler. A second St Patrick has been brought up, and now a third, with a vision of others—and the evidence for the existence of all by no means strengthens the belief that there ever was *one*. Here, as with so many of the primitive saints or missionaries, identity is confused by the unadorned preacher of the Word in a barbarous and poor country being spoken of in later ecclesiastical literature as if he were adorned with all the dignities and decorations of a prelate of the fourteenth century. Unfortunately for the truth of history, it has been a necessity of the Church of Rome to maintain that all the magnifi-

expect much light upon Roman Christianity in Scotland, when even in the great rich province of England that Christianity was extinguished without leaving a sign. It is one of the difficulties of history, that the Welsh, professing, as they did, to be the representatives of Roman Britain, should afford no evidence that they carried the Christianity of the Roman province with them to their mountains.

The vestiges whence it is inferred that the Empire had for a time so far established itself in Scotland as to bring the natives over to the habits of peaceful citizens, belong almost exclusively to the country south of Antonine's wall, between the Forth and the Clyde. Coins and weapons have been found farther north, but scarcely any vestige of regular settlement. None of the pieces of Roman sculpture found in Scotland belong to the districts north of the wall. It is almost more significant still, that of the very considerable number of Scottish Roman inscriptions in the various collections, only one was found north of the wall, and that in the strongly-fortified station of Ardoch, where it commemorated that it was dedicated to the memory of a certain Ammonius Damionis.[1]

On the other hand, it is in that unsubdued district that the memorials of Roman contest chiefly abound. Probably no other country in the world is so thickly crowded with the marks of war as Scotland, and of these the Romans have their share. A few embankments, popularly attributed to the Italian invaders, have been appropriated by geology as diluvial slopes

cence and complexity of its later hierarchy belonged to the Church from the very beginning.

[1] Wilson, ii. 27.

cast up by water.[1] Still there remain acknowledged as Roman, a sufficient number of works to create a special topographical feature in the country. From whatever cause it may arise, they are so numerous as to justify the belief that there are more known and recognised Roman camps in Scotland than in all the rest of the world.

The special affluence of the country in this class of remains was noticed by General Roy, who, as the pioneer of the Ordnance Survey still going on, had excellent opportunities for noting the peculiarity. "That works," he says, "of this very temporary nature, after so many centuries elapsed, should be found anywhere to exist, is truly singular, and seems almost incredible; and yet that this is really the case in North Britain will fully appear in the course of these Essays. Must we then conclude—and indeed there seems to be but too great reason for doing so—that the circumstance of their existence and discovery in the north is owing to the slower progress made in the cultivation of the lands there, than in the more fertile parts of the island towards the south?" He then asks why such vestiges are wanting in other stages of Roman contest—in the skirts of the Apennines—in Africa, Spain, and Gaul; and concludes that the probable reason why they are not found in these countries is because they are not sought for—and that "from their figure and dimensions not being thoroughly understood, or at least attended to."[2]

[1] The fine embankments called the Roman Camp near Callander are set down as a geological formation, though Scott spoke of them as

> "The mouldering lines,
> Where Rome, the empress of the world,
> Of yore her eagle wings unfurled."

[2] Prefatory Introduction, iv.

There may, however, be deeper reasons for the specialty. In the south, Roman conquest was rapid —at all events complete—work. There were no contested margins. In the northern regions of the European continent, the great victory of Arminius or Herman seems to have permanently stopped all efforts in that direction half a century before Agricola's wars. If we look at the physical structure of the mountain-ranges from Hanover to the Alps, which guard the great northern plain of Europe, we shall find them ill-suited for border warfare. Few parts of the world are so impenetrable for troops. This comes neither of their height nor their abruptness, but because they are not articulated into lines of hills and corresponding valleys, like the greater mountain-ranges on the Continent and those of the Highlands of Scotland. If an army were not sufficiently strong to take and command the whole range, attempts to penetrate within it were useless. Hence the empire stopped at the edge of the mountains, and within and beyond them was free Germany. Scotland was a frontier, however, in which there was a long contest, the boundary of the empire alternately pushing onwards and driven backwards; and it is in such a district that we might expect what we find—the vestiges of close and continued warfare.

In Scotland, these camps are as easily distinguishable from other ancient works of defence as the cottage of an English colonist may be from the craal of a savage family. When we come on a fortress of stone mounds on the top of a hill or a rock—rough, massive, and strong—that is not the work of the Romans. They affected the plains rather than the hills, for they were

on the march, and the camp was only thrown up for temporary protection. The works were always quadrangular, with rampart and ditch—one or more of each. They are still so definitely marked that it is easy to believe them, when fresh and in use, to have been as cleanly cut and sloped as the terraces of a well-kept Dutch garden. The Romans were thorough martinets in the handling of troops. Completeness, precision, symmetry—these were the governing influences in the camp. There is no wise precept of modern warfare that was not in thorough observance among them. They deemed a fully-trained legionary too valuable an article to be idly risked, and economised their troops to the utmost. This principle arose in complete contrast to the Oriental warfare of which they saw so much, where the end was gained by the impetus of undisciplined numbers and a profuse waste of life. Indeed, there have been many affairs in modern civilised warfare, that, though we must not speak of Roman humanity, would have shocked the Roman parsimony of the soldier's life. Hence all movements were compact. There was no straggling, and the soldier never slept till he had done his fatigue-duty, and the body to which he belonged had surrounded itself with the stated protections appertaining to it.

The Romans were acutely alive to that precept of warfare, that a soldier is not to be depended on unless he knows his coadjutors, and knows what they are to do, and whether they will do it. Accordingly, the Roman camp was constructed on a system, and arranged so symetrically that every trained soldier knew all its parts, as a sailor knows the build and tackle of a ship; and even in a strange camp the soldier would

recognise the departments, as well as a sailor from one ship of the line would recognise the departments of another. So the legionary brought from Spain or Egypt, and set down in a camp in Strathearn, would find himself at home at once. He would know that in the centre, a little to the rear, was squared off the prætorium of the general's headquarters, and that right in front a road led out of it through the prætorian gate; that in square masses on the right and left wings were the cohorts of allies—the foot outside and the horse within. He would know where to find the diagonal thoroughfares, the quintana, and principia; and placed with like precision would be the depositories of baggage and fodder, the places for staking horses, and the offices where business was transacted.

Polybius, the Greek historian, who lived about two centuries before Christ, has sent down to us some of the most picturesque and remarkable characteristics of the Romans, and especially of their warfare. Among these are an accurate analysis of all the several departments of the Roman camp. A great military authority has found these details to tally to his entire satisfaction with the camps in the north of Scotland. We know that the Romans were tenaciously conservative of their practices, but that the camps in North Britain should precisely coincide with those which must have been seen some three centuries earlier, infers an extremity of immutability; and one would rather throw it on General Roy's military experience than the exact fitting of the Scots camps to the Polybian castrametation, that he can account for at least one army of 30,000 Roman troops having traversed the country, the camps holding about 26,000,

and the proper outposts accounting for the rest. The General, however, submitted his computations to a curious cross-test. Polybius is not the only author who has left us a detailed account of the Roman camp. The same function was performed in his own way some 300 years later by a certain Hyginus, who calls himself a gromaticus, or land-surveyor.[1] The camp had still, in its general elements, a resemblance to the old one. It was still square; the prætorium in the same place, but rather different in shape, with the prætorian gate and the two transverse streets. But there were radical changes in the distribution of the troops, arising out of the political conditions of conquest and acquisition. The allies were no longer separated into two masses on the right and left wing. Desertions and dealings with the enemy suggested the policy of completely surrounding them with Roman troops; a thin line of these, in small divisions, bordered every side of the camp, and was separated from the mixed troops in the centre by a path called the Sagular Street, parallel to each rampart. General Roy

[1] This fragment is preserved in the quarto volume called 'Hygini Gromatici et Polybii Megalopolitani de Castris Romanis quæ extant, cum notis et animadversionibus, quibus accedunt dissertationes aliquot de re eadem militari populi Romani, R. H. S. 1660.' The Latinity of the land-surveyor has brought him no fame as an author, and critics have found that it is not very accurately rendered. Had it been a work of genius, commentators would have laboured at its perfect restoration. Being what it is, the editor has taken an effective but rather cumbersome plan for relieving himself from responsibility. He has accompanied his own rendering by a reprint literative of the text as he found it, without stops or breaks. Hence the fragment begins thus—"Nuncpapilionumtensionemcohortiumsuprascriptarumostendimuspapiliounusoccupatpedesdecem," &c. This is articulated into "Nunc papilionum tensionem cohortium suprascriptarum ostendimus. Papilio unus occupat pedes decem," &c.

finds in the Hyginian camp the traces of the decay of the old military rigidness. The amount of fatigue-duty exacted for the protection of the troops was relaxed, and they were crowded into smaller space. He estimated that the great camp at Ardoch, if filled on the Hyginian system, would hold from 60,000 to 70,000 men, and would predicate an army of at least 80,000.

The line of Roman camps reaches as far as Aberdeenshire and Inverness-shire. The most remarkable of them, however, are found in that natural highway northward, formed by Strathallan, Strathearn, and Strathmore. The most remarkable of all are the camps at Ardoch Bridge. Here, in the first place, is a strong fort, breaking the natural outline of the country. It is square, according to the custom of the Romans, and consists of several high ramparts, with deep ditches between. The neighbourhood is strewn with smaller works, but close to the fort are two large camps, one considerably larger than the other. Their lines cross each other, and show that the larger is the older of the two. Taken together, they are a testimony to the fastidious precision of the Roman legionaries. Other troops, when occupying the spot where there was already a camp, might have accommodated themselves to it, or at all events, if it was too large, might have run a rampart through, reserving the space they desired. But the smaller camp has evidently been run up independently of the existence of the larger. Something in the fastidious accuracy necessary in the division of a Roman encampment was inconsistent with the use of the old rampart, and so the whole work of intrenchment was done over again.

In conjunction with their ramparts, forts, and camps, their great roads must be looked to as part of the military system of the Romans. These radiated from the centre, and penetrated in every direction to the farthest extremities of the empire. A symbol of the stubborn persistency of the conquering people, they were carried straight onwards, never swerving to the right or the left, and disdaining, after the practice of modern engineering, to humour the inequalities of the soil. When insuperable impediments faced the progress onwards, they were tunnelled, but in such districts as the Scottish Lowlands the road passed straight over the broad hill. Near Rome these roads were broad and level, and so smoothly paved as to have in some measure anticipated the railway, and to account for the practice of the Roman men of fashion, who delighted to drive about on them in chariots without springs.[1] This perfection of finish disappeared as they spread outwards into distant regions, where the soldier only used them; but to their extremities they were heavily paved, and as enduring in their structure as if the empire they belonged to would require them so long as the crust of the earth should keep together. The agricultural improver, when he comes upon these abiding tracks of Roman conquest, is provoked to find that he will not only have to remove the upper pavement of heavy boulders, but that when this is done there is a deep foundation of gravel and other hopeless matter

[1] The Roman roads have a literature of their own. See 'Histoire des Grands Chemins de l'Empire Romain, contenant l'origine, progrès, et etenduë quasi incroyable de chemins militaires, pavez depuis la ville de Rome jusques aux extrémitez de son Empire. Où se voit la grandeur et la puissance incomparable des Romains; ensemble l'éclaircissement de l'Itineraire d'Antonin et de la Carte de Peutinger.' Par Nicolas Bergier, Avocat au Siège Presiddal de Reims. 2 vols. 4to, 1736.

to be dealt with, so that he reaches the prudent conclusion that the enterprise of removal will not repay itself.[1]

The great north road touched the sea at Boulogne, and was resumed on the opposite side. Scotland was deemed worthy of two great lines of road. The one left the southern wall near Carlisle, and passed by Langtown and Birrenswork to the western extremity of the northern wall. The other, which might be called the trunk line, was that by which the troops were to get on to the far north. It is a continuation of the great English Watling Street, and enters Scotland near the head of the river Coquet, passing by Jedburgh, where it is very conspicuous, and on by the Eildon Hills and the Pentlands to Cramond, and thence onwards to the northern wall, along which there was a fine military way, which would join the north and the south roads. For purely military purposes the road appears to have been carried northwards into Aberdeenshire. It is easier to trace the track through highly-cultivated land than through mountain districts, where a coating of heath and moss renders the line little distinguishable from the other stony covering of the mountain. Patches of the paving appear here and there among the camps in Strathearn or Strathmore, and the peasant will speak of finding his way from Ardoch to Perth without coming off the old road.

[1] One of the best specimens of a Roman byroad passes through probably the highest-rented land in the empire, between Edinburgh and the bathing-town of Portobello. It is called the Fishwife's Causey, from its having been, or been supposed to have been, used by these women in carrying their fish to the Edinburgh market.

CHAPTER III.

The Unrecorded Ages.

REASONS FOR PLACING THIS BETWEEN THE ROMAN PART AND THE CONTINUATION—PREHISTORIC VESTIGES—HOW THEY SUPERSEDE THE FABULOUS HISTORIES—THE GEOLOGICAL CONDITIONS IN WHICH THEY ARE FOUND—REASON WHY SCOTLAND IS PECULIARLY RICH IN ANCIENT REMAINS—ANCIENT FORTRESSES—THE CATERTHUNS—DUNSINNANE HILL—OTHER INSTANCES—THE VITRIFIED FORTS—LAKE DWELLINGS AND STRENGTHS—THE CATRAIL—THE DANISH DUNES—MYSTERIOUS HILL-WORKS—TAPUC OF TORWOOD—THE LAWS—PICTS' HOUSES AND OTHER UNDERGROUND BUILDINGS—ARTIFICIAL CAVES—CAIRNS, CHAMBERED AND UNCHAMBERED—MAES-HOWE—DISPOSAL OF THE DEAD—URNS AND BURNING—WEAPONS, STONE AND METALLIC—DEFENSIVE ARMOUR—QUESTION OF THE STONE, BRONZE, AND IRON AGES—DECORATIONS—INFERENCES AS TO ART AND CIVILISATION.

It has been found convenient to tell by itself the history of the sojourn of the Romans in Scotland. Their influence on the Scotland which afterwards became a nation, might be said to be rather topographical than political. The recollections and memorials attached to them were like the traditions of a visit in far-off times from distinguished guests, who had left behind them illustrious recollections and interesting relics—the mute memorials of a mighty people whose power had departed. Not but that the Roman empire had a great

influence on the constitution and social condition of Scotland. That influence, however, was not imparted by conquest: it came into Scotland in later times, from close alliance with the Continental nations in which the imperial institutions continued to live. Any account of this infusion of Roman institutions does not, therefore, belong to the time when the Romans departed, but to a period far on in history.

The fabulous historians dealt easily with the Roman period, as with everything else. It was but an episode in a history, going as far back as that of Rome itself. Of late years a vast process of legendary fiction has been cut away from the early history of nearly every civilised nation. The fabulous history of nations is abandoned with some regret, as the visible form taken by the aspirations of national pride and patriotism; and it is justly enough said that the fables are part of a nation's history, since they are the narrative of the traditional creed which influenced the people. Undoubtedly they are so, but in this, their new claim to historical consideration, they belong to the period when they were invented and believed, not to that which they falsify. Whatever, therefore, is said of the fabulous history of Scotland, shall be given farther on in connection with the motives for inventing the fables, and the influence exercised by them on the popular mind.

It is unfortunate that many of those who have been busiest in extinguishing these picturesque and venerable fables have been apt to substitute others of their own. These profess to be born of the philosophy of history, and to be steeped in learning and sagacity; but to common minds in search of fact they are not less unreal than the old fables, and only much less

amusing. It would almost seem as if the critics who extinguished the old epics considered themselves bound to fill up the empty space they had made in history, and fell to this task in so exceedingly conscientious a spirit that they have given the world a far—very far—larger bulk of literature than they have removed.[1]

There are now but faint remnants of this method of filling history with speculation, and its speedy final disappearance may be hoped for. It has naturally been elbowed off by a new and healthy system of inquiry, which, if it do not supply all that history demands, yet is satisfactory and complete in what it gives. Of this method of supplying the deficiencies of early history we have already seen a little in dealing with the sojourn of the Romans in Scotland. It examines and classifies the real evidence of their existence which the ancient inhabitants of the land may have left behind them, and it draws inferences, feeble and vague sometimes at first, but endowed with that virtue of ascertained truths which fits them to truths coming from other directions, insomuch that patient efforts are sometimes

[1] Their way of manufacturing it is this: When they alight on some list of kings or chiefs, whose very existence hangs on an extremely slender thread of testimony, they set each of them up as a historical character, and speculate on his policy, and its influence on his own and foreign countries, as knowingly, and with as noble a sequence of rounded sentences, as any great historian could employ in treating of the policy of Julius Cæsar or Frederick the Great. In like manner, when some sort of office or national or district practice is casually mentioned in any dry old chronicle, which leaves its practical nature in utter darkness, the historical philosopher takes it up, looks at it, and then writes about it at length, crowding his pages with conjectures about it, if his nature be sceptical; but, on the other hand, if he be practical and sagacious, describing the character and functions of the office as minutely and fearlessly as a law dictionary tells those of a Lord Chancellor, a parish beadle, or a chief constable at the present day.

crowned by the completion of an inductive system which fills up a blank in written history.

There is, at all events, in this system of inquiry, the satisfaction of having possession of absolute facts, be their ultimate tendency what they may. I propose, then, here to start with a brief account of certain tangible memorials of old times, of which it may be at least asserted that they were made or possessed by inhabitants of Scotland, and are therefore, in some measure, a testimony to practices and capacities that existed among the people. And if in many instances they are yet far isolated from anything that can tell us of the origin and destinies of the people they belonged to, or the age of their construction, yet others happily assimilate in some measure to the other testimonies of past history, and in all these are specialties and characteristics which are worthy of being known as undoubted facts in the history of mankind.[1]

And first, a word on the general geological and topographical conditions of the country, for these are not only closely connected with the character of its me-

[1] It may be said that the proper place for an analysis of the items of what has been called prehistoric matter, should have been placed at the commencement of the book, and before the chapters on the Roman occupancy. The author believes, however, that it will be more clear and effective where he has placed it. The memorials now to be dealt with connect themselves with other occupants of the soil who may have belonged to it any series of ages before the Roman occupancy, or throughout that period, or after it was over. Thus it will be found that these memorials blend into and form a sequence with others of a distinctly later period, and the sequence thus created by the nature of things would have been broken by any attempt at a more accurate adjustment. Such an adjustment would be in reality a breaking up of a natural sequence, by first describing the remains older than the Roman period, then giving that period its due, and on the other side of it reviving the account of the vestiges of the native inhabitants in a later age.

morials of unknown times, but have had their own special influence on the historical destinies of the people.

In the first place, it seems clear that the oldest works of man which have yet been found in Scotland, are more recent than the latest of the geological formations. It is held as admitted that, over the whole world, in the stone strata of geology, no trace of man or any of his works has been found. There is a petrified human skeleton in the British Museum, but this has been an incidental incrustation, like the nests and baskets petrified in springs impregnated with lime or other consolidating matter. The stratified beds which in some great convulsions have kept the impressions of the animals and vegetables of some epoch of the transitions through which the globe has passed, contain no testimony, as heretofore deciphered, to the existence of man. There are, however, formations which, though they are not of stone, are counted geological, as having been the effect of causes no longer in operation. Every water produces changes on the adjoining land by its motions —adding here and abstracting there. The effects thus produced are not to be counted among the permanent geological elements of a country. But there exist large effects, which have been caused by waters, or other forces no longer present to change them; and these, as they are permanent conditions of the crust of the earth, are counted as geological. Such are the diluvial lands stretching in level tracts from the edges of the chief rivers to the slopes of the nearest hills. Whether caused by the escape of the waters or the upheaval of their beds, their appearance is that of a deposit from waters which have ceased to exist.

Some late discoveries in France have tended to dis-

turb the received notions as to this formation. In a portion of it called the Drift, where boulders, gravel, and sand are huddled in masses, seemingly by waters now extinct, some pieces of flint have been found, which, although they can hardly be said to have a shape, have yet an appearance which no known natural force could have communicated to them. They appear, in fact, to have been chipped, and this is maintained to be sufficient evidence that they have passed through the hands of man. No such discoveries have been made in Scotland. True, in some of the great haugh flats, as in that where Glasgow stands, and the carse-lands on the Forth and Tay, human bones have been found, a harpoon or spear made of bone, and the remains of several canoes or primitive vessels. But the existence of these can be accounted for by a phenomenon to which such a district is any day liable—a change in the course of the stream passing through it. Hence there is no necessity for believing these ancient vessels to have sailed on waters which, from some great geological change, have ceased to exist. Roman remains stand on this diluvial formation—so do the stone circles, barrows, and other monuments supposed to belong to some age indefinitely older than the Roman invasion.[1] In Scotland we are thus at present clear of the diffi-

[1] The flat district lying between the Sound of Jura and Lochawe, perforated by the Crinan Canal, is perhaps one of the best fields for the observation of this phenomenon, as it is still in a state of nature, or but recently brought in, while most of the other land of the same kind is the oldest tilled land in the country. The aspect of this piece of country is as if extinct waters covering it had once joined Lochawe to the sea. It is quite level, with a few rocks and small hills starting abruptly out of it like islands. Its surface is thickly strewn with the stones called Druidical, standing by themselves and in circles—along with large barrows and other remains of unknown antiquity.

culty of accounting for man and his ways, as under geological conditions different from the present.

The geology of Scotland runs through the entire gamut of the variations in the received systems of geology. There runs north and south an axis of the primitive unstratified rocks, cropping forth here and there from Caithness to Kirkcudbright, in granite, porphyry, and felspar. On its flanks, or covering it, are those stratified rocks which are supposed to have been roasted by proximity to this mass in its molten state, and these form the large districts of gneiss and schist which make the greater portion of the Highlands, and give character to its scenery, the gneiss tending to undulation, and thus causing the monotonous flat hills and shallow valleys of the central Highlands, while the lamular and horny character of the schist comes forth in the rugged and grotesque spikes of the Trosachs and other tourist districts. An articulation of mountains of a different class, because sedimentary in their structure, carries the mountain-chain to the English border. South of the Tay, to the east and the west spreads a broad cake of the later mechanical or unaltered sedimentary formations, rich in coal and iron, and often pierced by traps and other irruptive rocks attributed to recent plutonic action. It is at the very northern extremity of the island—on the coast-edge of Sutherland, in small patches among the Western Isles, and in a margin of the south-west coast—that we find the lias, oolite, and other recent formations, which, like the same strata in the south of England, abound in large and emphatic organic remains. Lastly, here and there, both in the mountains and the flatter districts, are tracts of the diluvium already referred to.

The map at once shows Scotland to be a country well adapted for union and defence. It has a backbone in the range of mountains, open to retreat from all quarters. There are few parts of the country more than fifty miles distant from the sea on the one side and from mountains on the other. On studying these conditions, one sees how it might very well be the land where the concentrating power of geographical conditions forced two uncongenial races of different language and temperament into combination. The mountain districts, all but a few diluvial valleys, must have ever been unproductive. The wild animals among them must have been very few, and they could only have been inhabited to any extent at the times when there were cultivated lands at no great distance, which their inhabitants could pillage. The rest of the country has none of the natural fertility that generally attracts indolent and unadventurous inhabitants, but it is extremely rich in the raw materials of active industry. Coal, iron, lime, and building-stone abound; there is much water-power for machinery, and the sea is accessible for commerce and fishing. There is scarcely any natural soil save the haughs or carses on the border of the rivers; but the traps, limestones, and other minerals, are found valuable chemical elements in the soils created by culture. Lead, copper, and nickel are found in considerable quantities. Silver is still extracted from the lead-mines, and gold has been found in the quartz, but not in sufficient quantity to pay the cost of working it. For minor natural productions there are nodules of agate and veins of onyx in the trap rocks, and finely-coloured rock crystals in the granite mountains. Just one stone coming up to the rank of a

gem has been found in the Cairngorm Mountains—it is the beryl, or aqua-marine. It has affected the history of the ornamental arts in Scotland, too, that pearls have been found in abundance in the rivers. In connection with the discovery of ancient weapons, it will be found to be interesting to know whether the flint is native to Scotland. The Chalk formation, to which it belongs, is wanting; but in the north-eastern districts flints have been found in considerable abundance, and it is thence inferred that chalk had been in existence, and had disappeared through some wasting process.

It is only in the strips of diluvial ground already spoken of that stone is not found close at hand. A country of such geological character has more than the ordinary opportunities for preserving the works raised by the people, at periods when they had not advanced beyond the use of the readiest materials. Accordingly, Scotland is rich in what are called the remains of primitive inhabitancy. In the timbered plains or morasses which make so great a share of Northern Europe, there may have been fought great contests, calling into existence many defensive works, which have all disappeared from the face of the earth ages ago. In Scotland such things have had a permanency.

The country is crowded with hill-fortresses, small and great; they may be counted by hundreds. They consist of mounds of earth or stone, or both, running round the crests of hills. Only those most remarkable for their size or other specialties need here be noticed. In the northern part of Forfarshire, just where the Grampians begin to swell into mountains, there are two conical detached hills, called the White and the Black Caterthun. The one has its name evidently

from the rings of white stone which are seen to encircle it; the other is termed black by way of contrast, because the turf rings surrounding it make no variation on the natural dark hue of a Scots heather hill. The White Caterthun is a fortress of four concentric circles of stone, the innermost of which has a diameter of some eighty paces. Perhaps the best conception of the greatness of this work may be taken from the simple description of the Engineer officer, who, in his search for the vestiges of Roman camps, was amazed to discover this remnant of native engineering. "The most extraordinary thing that occurs in this British fort is the dimensions of the rampart, composed entirely of large loose stones, being at least twenty-five feet thick at top, and upwards of one hundred at bottom, reckoning quite to the ditch, which seems, indeed, to be greatly filled up by the tumbling-down of the stones. The vast labour that it must have cost to amass so incredible a quantity, and carry them to such a height, surpasses all description. A single earthen breastwork surrounds the ditch; and beyond this, at the distance of about fifty yards on the two sides, but seventy on each end, there is another double intrenchment of the same sort running round the slope of the hill. The intermediate space probably served as a camp for the troops, which the interior post, from its smallness, could only contain a part of. The entrance into this is by a single gate on the east end; but opposite to it there are two leading through the outward intrenchment, between which a work projects, no doubt for containing some men posted there as an additional security to that quarter."[1]

[1] Roy's Military Antiquities, 205-6.

The space within the inner rampart is a dead flat, completely protected by the huge mound which surrounds it, and cuts it off from all vision beyond. Standing on that mound, one cannot fail to see that the engineer of the Caterthun had a great military tactic in view when he chose its site. It comes out as a sort of bastion from the Grampians, which range themselves in a billowy mass towards the north and west. It overlooks the great valley of Strathmore, and beyond it Fife and the Lothians as far as the border mountains. At what time this fortress was raised, and what race of men they were who manned it, seem questions idle to be asked, since the chances of any answer being ever made to them appear so utterly hopeless. It may be a fact, however, worth noting, that the district of country overlooked by this stronghold is the same that is the most thickly filled with the vestiges of Roman invasion. Some forty miles farther north, at Echt in Aberdeenshire, the detached conical hill called the Barmkin is crowned by a fortress of five concentric ramparts, in some respects the rival of the Caterthun. The ramparts are not so vast, but they are interesting from a higher state of preservation. There are some remnants of a face of masonry, leading to the supposition that the ramparts were not originally mere heaps of stones, but had been regularly built. The device for covering the entrance by zigzagging it through the several ramparts is still visible, and adjoining the fortress there are some of the circles commonly called Druidical. Of these we know nothing, but that they stand where they are, bearing their relation to the fortress open to any amount of guessing. There is a hill-fort of this kind on the famed Dunsinnane. It

consists of several concentric ramparts, made seemingly out of the nearest available material to be found on the surface of the hill. Dunsinnane is a range of hills, and it is not the highest of the range that is thus fortified. Those who made the fortress had no doubt a reason for their selection. The hill overlooks a vast district, on to and beyond Birnam Wood, and from far away the successive ramparts may be seen on the profile like terraces or notches. The country people call the fortified top "The Giant's Hill;" and at the time when it came to be associated with the story of Macbeth, it was no doubt invested with many traditions.[1]

Of the hill-forts of Scotland one kind has been and still remains a mystery, defying the learning and acuteness of all investigators. These are called vitrified forts, because their substance has passed through fire and taken a vitreous character. Some portions of them are bright like the scoriæ of a glass-house, but the greater part more resemble those of an ironwork. When they were first brought to light, nearly a century ago, scientific men caught at the idea that they were the remains of recent volcanoes. The geologists now scout that supposition, and indeed no one can see them without pronouncing them the handiwork of man. But how, or with what end, had they been subjected to so strange a process? One view was that they were the mere receptacles of gigantic fires of timber, whether lighted as beacons or for some religious observance. But if some of them are of a merely fragmentary

[1] A topographical inquiry as to Dunsinnane and the district round it, and an account of the result of excavations on the works there, may be found in the Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland, ii. 93.

character, there are others so elaborately put together, rampart within rampart, that it is difficult to think of any other object in raising them but that of a fortress. One of these, on Craigphadric, near Inverness, is exactly in the place where we shall find St Columba visiting the king of the Picts. Like the Caterthun, Craigphadric was evidently selected as fit to occupy a great military position. It is a conical hill, above 1000 feet high, isolated and abrupt, standing guard between the Highlands and the Lowlands. In front of it rolls the rapid Ness, on the other side of which extend the fruitful plains of Moray; behind are the mountains of Inverness and Ross. Another vitrified fort, Dunadeer, in Aberdeenshire, is early mentioned in history as a fortress, and continued to be one down to about the sixteenth century, a square tower of masonry having been built within the vitrified ramparts. Another is on the shore of Loch Etivè, opposite to the Castle of Dunstaffnage. Its fragments are found on a double-topped rocky mound rising out of the narrow plain, and overlooking long stretches of sea, loch, and of the Island of Mull. Its proper Highland name is Dun Macsniachain. This has been set down as the Berigonium spoken of by the monkish chroniclers as the capital of the Pictish kings. We are to suppose, then, that their court was held here before the removal of the establishment, first to Craigphadric, and afterwards to Forteviot on the Earn.[1]

Since they did not profess to be walls, but were merely mounds, it was difficult to see a motive for

[1] Among the people of the neighbourhood the Latin name thus given to the vitrified fort seems to have superseded its native name, and the inhabitants speak of it as "Bergonian."

cementing them by so laborious a process as absolute vitrification. On this was started the theory that their origin might have been accidental. A stone rampart having been raised upon a hill, it was supposed to be strengthened by a quantity of timber stakes, while within its area might be a vast assemblage of wooden houses, all suited to make a tremendous conflagration if ignited by accident or siege operations. Fire was the calamity chiefly dreaded by the Scandinavian chiefs in their great wooden barracks, and such a calamity is the crisis in the beautiful chronicle called 'The Story of Burnt Njal.' But then, why should these conflagrations be peculiar to Scotland? The vitrified forts here are numerous; there is not one in England or Ireland; nor have the industrious antiquaries of Scandinavia found anything of the kind within their own field to speculate upon.[1] The general tendency of the evidence about them is in the direction of design. It has been noticed that in the portions of these works where the fire has not obliterated the characteristics of the original stone, it is sometimes not of the kind nearest at hand, but has been brought from some distance. Toward the motive for taking this trouble, Professor Macculloch says what, if fully established, might be counted conclusive—he is commenting on Dunadeer as "a strong military position." "I remarked that at Dun Macsniachain the materials of the

[1] There is just one hint of a vitrified fort out of Scotland. It is in the commune of Cledran in France. Its structure is curious, but quite different from that of the Scots works. The vitrification is in the inside of a thick wall or mound, and seems to have been caused by fires confined or smothered in a flue or channel, and operating on fusible stones so as to produce molten matter, which passed between the adjoining stones and cemented them together. See the 'Journal of the British Archæological Association,' ii. 278.

hill itself were not vitrifiable, but that a very fusible rock was present at a short distance, or scattered in fragments about the plain. The same is true here, and in both cases the forts are not erected out of the materials nearest at hand, which are infusible, but collected at material labour from a distance."[1] He infers, as the obvious conclusion, that those who made the fortresses intended to vitrify their walls. It would be satisfactory to have fuller scientific information on the point, especially as it is one which skill and trouble can, to all appearance, settle.

The remnants of a very characteristic method of ancient defence have long been known in Scotland. It was accomplished by insulation in an inland lake. Natural islands are obvious places of strength, and many of them throughout Scotland have the castles of later times built on them, as Lochleven, Lochdoon, &c. I am not aware of any artificial lake bearing a stone edifice; but so valuable does insulation appear to have been to the people who did not know how to enclose themselves with stone walls, that artificial islands were frequently made of stakes and stones. The first of these brought into prominent notice was in the Loch of Forfar, when it was partly drained about the year 1780. The remains discovered on these islands show that they were not mere garrisoned fortresses, but were dwelling-places for families, sometimes containing several, so that they might be counted as villages. If there were not an enemy in possession of boats on the loch, no position could well be more impregnable than such an island in tolerably deep water. They have been found in all parts of the country. They are well known in

[1] Highlands, &c., p. 291.

Ireland, where they are called Crannoges, after the name given to them by the chroniclers, who preserve examples of their comparatively recent use.[1] A great stimulus has lately been given to the investigation of this kind of archæological phenomenon, by its discovery in other parts of the world, and especially in Switzerland, where it has been discovered on so large a scale, and so affluent in relics, as to afford ample means for examining the domestic habits of the people who abode in such dwellings.

Whether in imitation of the Romans, or from some conception of their own, possibly earlier than the Roman invasion, the inhabitants of Scotland possessed a wall strengthened by a system of forts. It is fortunate that it was seen by the antiquary Gordon, and caught a strong hold of his attention. He has accordingly followed its track, and described a great deal that agricultural improvement has obliterated. He finds its northern commencement about a mile from Galashiels, on the river Gala, a tributary to the Tweed on its northern side; and there is a conjecture that it may have been carried from the other side of the stream across to the east coast. The most southerly trace of it is at

[1] One Thomas Phettiplace, in his answer to an inquiry from the Government as to what castles or forts O'Neil hath, and of what strength they be, states (May 15, 1567), "For castles, I think it be not unknown unto your honours he trusteth no point thereunto for his safety, as appeareth by the raising of the strongest castles of all his countreys; and that fortification which he only dependeth upon is in certain fresh-water loghes in his country, which from the sea there come neither ship nor boat to approach them. It is thought that there, in the said fortified islands, lyeth all his plate, which is much, and money, prisoners, and gages: which islands hath in wars to fore been attempted, and now of late again by the Lord-Deputy there, Sir Harry Sydney, which, for want of means for safe-conducts upon the water, it hath not prevailed."—Cited in Lubbock, Prehistoric Times, 120.

Peel Fell, in Cumberland; its profile is a ditch between two walls. It has three local names: "The Catrail," "The Deil's Dyke," and "The Picts' Work Ditch." It passes through the most classical portions of the border land, by Yarrow, Deloraine Burn, Melrose, and Liddesdale, then near the Leepsteel and Hermitage Castle. Gordon found its most distinct vestiges to be "24 and 26 feet broad and very deep, the ramparts on every side 6 or 7 feet in perpendicular height, and each of them 10 or 12 feet thick."[1] From the phenomenon that the moss has at one place thickened to a level with the top, so that the sides of the wall are exposed by digging, it is supposed that the work is of extreme antiquity.[2] There are several hill-forts on the line of this rampart, so disposed as to leave little doubt that they are elements of the system of fortification connected with the walls and ditch.

A set of edifices of a character totally distinct from any of the works just described, have been usually associated with them as a portion of the defences of ancient Scotland. In the north-western parts of Inverness-shire, in Ross-shire, Sutherland, and Orkney, there may still be seen, sometimes in deep valleys, at others on picturesque points of rock, round towers extremely symmetrical in their structure. They are circular, on a broad base, which narrows upwards with a graceful curve, like that on which Smeaton designed his light-house system, as being the form which nature proclaimed in the profile of the trunk of a tree, to be that in which strength and beauty united reach their highest development. They are called "Burghs," "Danish Towers," and "Pictish Towers." These build-

[1] Iter. Sept., 102.

[2] Wilson, ii. 79.

ings, at a distance, might pass for remnants of Gothic castles of the days of the English Edwards, but a close examination shows them to be far older. They are the work of masons unacquainted with the arch. They have no roofs, nor visible arrangements for retaining a roof; and the minor openings, which in the Norman style and the others derived from it would be closed by the arch, are simply flagged. From their perfect roundness the stranger would expect to find them built of finely-hewn stone in courses, but when he examines them he will find no mark of a tool on anything connected with their structure. Each is made of the surrounding shingle without mortar; and if any artificial means had been taken to procure the material, it must have been little more than the breaking-up of great stones by tossing them from precipices. The secret of keeping the pure rounded outline with materials so rude is, that the stones are all thin and flat, and chosen so as to give no opportunity for deviations exceeding half or a quarter of an inch; hence, though symmetrically round as seen from a little distance, the surface is rough.

The inside is as singular as the out. There are, in fact, in all of them two concentric walls—the outer circular, and widening to the base; the inner circular, and perpendicular like a well. The two thus approach each other as they rise in height. All round the inner wall are tiers of square openings into the space between the walls; and thus the interior resembles in some measure a columbarium, or Roman tomb-chamber for the reception of urns, only that the orifices in the burgh are fewer and farther apart. The space between the walls to which these openings lead is paved or flagged, so as to make several storeys of chambers or galleries, as they

are called, all of course decreasing in breadth the higher up they are. They are divided from each other into lengths by slabs, and in the larger lengths there are generally remnants of rude stairs, leading, as it were, through the successive storeys. Such is generally the type of these strange edifices, though there are slight variations from the standard. At Achir na Kyle in Sutherlandshire, and Dunalishaig on the Dornoch Firth, the chambers between the walls incline to the round or oval form instead of the rectangular.[1] The chief variation in these buildings is, however, in their dimensions, and on this something will have to be said.

And now comes the question—For what purpose were these strange structures raised? The answer has ever been immediate and uniform, as if it did not require a second thought; in fact, it has been an answer or decision without a question, and is to the effect that they are fortresses. The appearance decides that at once; but if they are viewed with a little consideration, the appearance is seen to decide too much. They resemble, as has been said, the towers of a castle of the Edwards; but such towers were made to flank curtains of wall, and would have been very incapable of defence standing alone. The fact is, that it was not till heavy artillery came into use that a small round building could defend itself; hence the Martello towers. The analogy is as if some very ancient wooden pipe were pronounced to be an instrument of war because its shape resembles that of an Armstrong gun.

In truth, from anything we can learn about defensive works earlier than the time of the Normans, we are not to expect to find them in the shape of castles built

[1] See the ground-plan in Cordiner's Antiquities, 118.

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house-fashion. The defences were such as we have seen—great heaps of stones surrounding, on the crests of hills, open spaces of country, in which large bodies of people could assemble. Some of the burghs would not hold twenty persons. The largest of them might perhaps, from their size and strength, be made in some measure defensible. We know that the largest of them all was sought as a place of refuge, and was defended. Erland, the son of Harold, having carried off a beautiful Norwegian widow, took refuge with her in the burgh of Mousa in Shetland, where her son besieged him for some time. Places not built as castles have often been so used in emergencies: the Normans, for instance, fortified the massive tombs which the Romans used to build over their dead. One of them is now the Castle of St Angelo; and the tomb of Cecilia Metella had doubtless often been a tower of strength. Mousa is by far the largest of the burghs, and with a little assistance could easily be made into a sort of castle.

The difficulty in supposing them to be strongholds is to find how they could assail any enemy occupied in pulling down their uncemented walls. There are no orifices of any kind outwards by which missiles or other weapons could have been used. The shape of the buildings is the worst possible for assailing an enemy. A square block is rather feeble; it requires something to flank it—that is, to be at right angles with its faces; and in the square towers afterwards built in Scotland there were very ingenious economical devices for effecting this—as, for instance, when it had to be done on a very small scale, by overlapping works at the top, or by bastions or turrets at the angles. The square tower may have both these assailants; the round can

have only one—a parapet or overlapping work above. There is nothing to show that the burghs were completed in this manner; and indeed the extent of structural knowledge shown in them would not admit of the construction of such a work.[1]

Then if we look to the curious recesses of the interior —the chambers between the outer and inner wall—and ask through their structure what their uses were, the inference from the larger buildings is that each chamber was a soldier's sleeping-place. No doubt there are chambers in these large specimens that might seem admirably suited for such a purpose. But there are chambers constructed in exactly the same manner in the smaller specimens, which could hardly accommodate a garrison of rabbits. It is quite impossible that these small specimens could have been defensible, and therefore it is unlikely that the larger ones were built for fortresses, though they might be rendered more available for defensive purposes.

These buildings are peculiar to Scotland. There is

[1] One of the most successful of those who have tried to make our Scots remains tell their own tale, is rather disappointed at finding the burghs not so defensible as they should be, and says that "the improbability of the Northmen abandoning their ships, and attempting a regular siege of one of these burghs, may account for the absence of the very distinct provisions for defensive operations against assailants, which are characteristic of the Anglo-Saxon burghs." And again, "Strongholds they undoubtedly are, but they retain no trace of features strictly adapting them to military forts. The Saxon burghs of England were rapidly superseded by the more efficient keep of their Norman conquerors; yet when we institute a comparison between Conigsburgh and Mousa or Dundernadil, it seems to present a contrast not unlike that which distinguishes the defensive operations of the wild-cat and the hedgehog—a contrast which either marks a very great change in the character of the hardy tribes that withstood the Roman legions, or indicates a striking difference between the races which occupied the northern and southern regions of Caledonia."—Wilson, ii. 3.

nothing in any other country bearing a close analogy to them; and, as we have seen, the Gothic flanking towers, which they most resemble, belong to a totally different age and condition of structural art. Baffled in all inferences from their structure, we look for information to any miscellaneous articles that may be found in them. In removing the rubbish within them, a skeleton has been here and there discovered; but as we know it to have been a practice to bury the dead within any remarkable monument, or even natural object, we can take nothing more from this than that the dead were disposed of in these buildings—we cannot infer that they were built as tombs. Some querns for grinding grain have been found in them, as also gold ornaments. In one instance there was found a long piece of flat bone, slightly adorned with angular-shaped cuttings, and with one end of it cut into long teeth like those of a comb. It is set down, not unnaturally, as a primitive hair-comb. The existence of such articles may be in several ways accounted for. They may have been funeral deposits, according to a practice presently to be noticed—they may be the relics of inhabitancy—they may have been hidden where they were found. It is provoking, no doubt, to follow traces that lead us only to darkness, and to be able, as the sole conclusion, to say that there are a set of peculiar buildings, and no one can tell for what purpose they were erected. It is an easy thing to hold that they must have been fortresses; and the human mind, which is fond of conclusions, dislikes the dissipation of them. But we shall get accustomed as we go on to the destruction of larger portions of belief. It is a useful process. When the historical stage is occupied by

shadows, the mind gets bewildered among them, and we cannot easily see and estimate any little morsels of actual truth that may come forward with its honest claims upon our notice.

On the hill in Berwickshire called Cockburn Law there is supposed, from old descriptions, to have been a structure of the same class as these "Danish burghs." It has long been too much obliterated to permit the comparison to be tested. From its size, however, and the quantity of its heavy stonework, it appears to have come nearer to another type of works, of which there are some specimens.

The district of the Torwood, in Stirlingshire, renowned in connection with the history of Wallace, rises in a rocky mound with a precipitous face, called the Tapuc. There were visible some dykes or ramparts, which partly surrounded the crest of the hill, and aided its natural inaccessibility. These were called "the Roman Camp" by the people of the country, but nothing could be less Roman in character than any works found there. Excavations having been made, it was found that these visible dykes were the outcropping of a process of works long hidden under the usual covering of a natural hill-top, trees included. In the works laid bare, which may have been but the foundations of superstructures, there were passages above and below, all lined with rough stones overlapping towards a covering, and there was a rude staircase. All these appeared to be adjuncts to a circular chamber between thirty and forty feet in diameter. Its enclosure, built with rude blocks, is a wall-face some ten feet high inside, but without it is rather a cairn topping the hill than a wall. Nothing can be

said of the purpose of this building, save what may be inferred from its fortress-like character. The Tapuc is in the middle of the great basin of the Forth. It overlooks the scene of many critical battles, and the great Roman works, passing from the Forth westwards.

Above the sandy beach of the Firth of Tay, which stretches from Monifieth to Broughty Ferry, is a rocky wooded hill called The Laws. It was observed that, although its structure was trap, it had long furnished a sort of quarry of good freestone for building farm-houses and enclosures all around. The stones were taken from buildings on the top. When these had in this manner been nearly obliterated, the proprietor of the hill found some equivalent for what had disappeared from the surface in clearing the foundations. Whatever may have been above ground, what was below, and may now be seen, is wonderful, and as mysterious as it is wonderful. What was carried off was all, or nearly all, freestone. The structures that remain are built of trap boulders. These are great walls, or solid blocks of masonry, which afford no clue to the nature of the buildings they had once supported. Some of them have a sort of crescent form, and they play out and in to each other, without, affording, except in one instance, a boundary or circumference in which a ground-plan for a building of any kind can be traced. The one exception to this chaos is a circular wall, about eighteen feet thick, with a passage leading through it into a round chamber about forty feet in diameter, and similar to that of the Tapuc. Those who have seen the small beehive houses in the west of Scotland and in Ireland, might have thought that here were the walls for supporting a

roof of the same character. But these small edifices are the simplest of all structures, though they are the rudiments of the dome. They are made by laying down circle after circle of stones slightly overlapping, so that each circle is rather narrower than the one below, and so all comes to a point. Such is the character of many edifices in the Isles and in Ireland, some of which have been places of Christian worship. In this manner, however, the closing of the roof can only be made on a very small scale. To have raised a roof of the same kind over the circle of the Laws would have been to raise a majestic dome, and to accomplish one of the greatest feats in architecture. The impressions left by the works there do not partake of such a character. Brute-force, and wonderful industry in accumulating masses of stone, are their characteristics. And for what were they raised—fortress, temple, or tomb? They give us no answer; and all that remains to be said is, that the works overlook wide stretches of country northwards to the Highland hills, and southwards over the Firth of Tay and Fifeshire.[1]

Another class of structures very abundant in Scotland are called Eard or Earth-houses, Picts' houses, and Weems. Their origin and use are shrouded in as deep a mystery as the round towers we have been discussing; and the perplexities of their mysteriousness are made almost the more emphatic by the darkness of the re-

[1] See "Plan and Views of Ancient Remains on the Summit of the Laws Hill in Forfarshire," Proceedings Ant. Soc. Scot., iii. 440. The proprietor of the Laws, as well as that of the Tapuc of the Torwood, have each gained golden opinions from the archæological world by the zeal with which they have, not without cost, excavated the curious relics on their estates.

cesses into which the inquirer who tries to solve their mysteries must descend. They exist in many places in Scotland, but chiefly they concentrate themselves near Glenkindy and Kildrummy, on the upper reaches of the river Don in Aberdeenshire. There they may be found so thickly strewn as to form subterranean villages, or even towns. The fields are, to use a common expression, honeycombed with them. They give no artificial signs above ground. The peasant will sometimes know where they are by an unploughed patch in the field, in which a few stones peep above ground, with furze growing in their interstices; in other instances the earth above is sufficient to let the plough pass over the roof of the edifice, and a small hole between two projecting stones marks its entrance. Through this hole a corpulent man will find difficulty in squeezing himself. It brings him to a sloping tunnel, which he descends some six or eight feet. He is then in a subterranean gallery, in which he may be able to stand upright; the ordinary height varies from five to eight feet. It is some thirty feet long, and may probably have lateral galleries to the right and the left. There are few places in which the sensation of the dungeon or burial in life is stronger than in these artificial caverns, and that on account of the colossal and massive character of the roof. There is no cement, and no mark of tooling on the stones. If the gallery be eight feet broad at the floor, which is not an uncommon breadth, the walls, built of rough stones, will be found so to slope inwards by overlapping, as to bring the sides within six feet of each other. Across this breadth are laid gigantic blocks of granite.

When we ask, What were the uses of such buildings?

we are again launched on the great ocean of guess-work. There is a laboriousness in their structure which we do not naturally connect with the makeshift arrangements which the savage is content with for his dwelling; yet that they have been human dwellings is the accepted opinion regarding them. If we adopt what is said by Ptolemy and other ancient geographers, and in some measure sanctioned by modern travellers, about a troglodytic or cavern-living population in Arabia, we may suppose that we have here the actual dwellings occupied by a race of like habits at the opposite extremity of the globe.

Any incidental testimony to their uses yielded up by these dark caverns has been extremely meagre. In general they have been found quite empty. In some of them there has been noticed a little rubbish, from which it may be inferred that at some time human beings had cooked and eaten food in them; as, for instance, cinders, bones of animals, and shells. A few articles, ornamental or useful, made of bone, flint, and bronze, have been found in them. In several the quern or hand-mill has been discovered; and this being indeed the only characteristic movable of which they have given up several specimens, it has sometimes been inferred that the buildings were ancient granaries. But, taken as a whole, the contents of these catacombs are not sufficiently extensive or characteristic to speak to the object for which they were made. Any incidents occurring in the course of the unknown number of centuries through which they have existed might be the cause of their trifling contents. A set of schoolboys seeking a holiday's amusement in their mysterious recesses—a set of gipsies using them for casual

shelter or concealment on their tramp—might be sufficient to leave such vestiges of human use as these structures afford. We can only tell what they pretty clearly have not been intended for. They have not been the sepulchres of the dead, nor have they been places of Christian worship; for both these uses have, as we shall presently see, their own special marks, and these are not found in the earth-houses. It is one of their specialties, too, that none of the stone sculpture so abundant in Scotland is found about them.[1]

It has not escaped the notice of those who have examined these works, and endeavoured to account for them, that Tacitus tells us how the Germans lived underground in winter.[2] To hold that the subterranean structures in Scotland are alone a sufficient existing testimony to the accuracy of a statement regarding the Germans, would be a too strong conclusion; but, on the other hand, it in no way impugns the accuracy of the statement of Tacitus that there are no remains in Germany itself of the underground habitations mentioned by him. The habitation in which the barbarian burrows in the earth to keep from the cold is likely enough, if we may judge from what travellers see, a mere temporary makeshift, that, when it ceases to be inhabited, will disappear almost as soon as the residence of the mole. On the other hand, the specialty that gives emphasis to the earth-houses of the north is their

[1] "In the remains of a work which seems to belong to the same family of underground edifices in Papa, in Orkney, it is reported by a local observer, that on each wall 'there is a neatly-engraved circle, about four inches in diameter,' but he is unable to say whether it is an artificial or a natural phenomenon; and this is the nearest approach to evidence of sculpture in the earth-houses."—Wilson's Annals, i. 114.

[2] "Solent et subterraneos specus aperire, eosque multo insuper fimo onerant, suffugium hiemi et receptaculum frugibus."—Germania, xvi.

enormous substantiality. Uncouth, gloomy, and utterly unadorned as they are, a wondrous amount of labour and considerable skill in mechanical power have been devoted to them by their makers, who have rendered them stable as the everlasting hills, and the monuments of a seriousness and tenaciousness of purpose which must have possessed some adequate inducement in the minds of the workmen.

Other works, to be found chiefly in the south of Scotland, resemble these earth-houses in what the builder would call the interior ground-plan and elevation. They resemble them, too, in the prodigious labour they have cost, and the failure to provide any evidence of the motive for so much labour. In other respects, however, the two sets of works are a sort of converse of each other. The earth-houses are made with colossal blocks of the hardest of stones, granite and porphyry, with no mark on them from any tool; the others are cut into the soft sandstone rock. In their form as galleries with branches they are much alike. Of these cut works there are examples at a spot pretty notorious in the tourist community—Hawthornden; and there are others cut into the steep sandstone rocks hanging over the Jed, a little way above Jedburgh.

We are led by analogy to the interior of the cairns or stone burrows, which have some resemblance to the earth-houses. Most of the cairns are merely heaps of stone deposited as they fall, but others have been raised in great bulk over stone chambers and galleries. These are rare. There are a few of them in Scotland, but until very lately we had to go to the banks of the Shannon, at New Grange, to see the highest development of this sort of work. Like many of the earth-

houses, the entrance is by a low tunnel leading to a central chamber, whence others branch off on each side. The central chamber of New Grange is, however, nearly twenty feet high. This, which had for more than a century and a half been one of the wonders of the world, encountered very lately a formidable rival. Near the celebrated stone circle in Orkney, called Stennis, another object served to break in upon the flat surface of the plain—a mound of stones covered with earth, very regular in its conical form, and surrounded by a concentric ditch. It is called by the neighbours Maes-howe. In 1861 it was opened, and found, like New Grange, to be perforated by a gallery, ending in a central chamber, whence others branched off. The upper portion of the central chamber had been removed, leaving walls thirteen feet high, but from their structure leaving it to be presumed that the chamber must have been fully twenty feet high. But between the two examples there were material differences, showing in the structure of Maes-howe a material advance in the architecture, if one may call it so, of these works—in fact, so great an advance that evidently there must have been many stages of development between the one and the other. In neither is there a knowledge of the arch. In Maes-howe there is a clear advance towards it, but at the point where one might have expected it to be discovered, there is a divergence into ingenious and laborious substitutes. New Grange is an absolute specimen of what is called cyclopean works—a chaotic result of strength and labour without skill. Gigantic stones, found apparently in the bed of the Shannon, have been leaned against each other as if by the hands of playful giants;

and when they would stand leaning with a space between, others have been brought to steady them and complete the enclosure, and then vast heaps have been laid on to keep them in their place by pressure. The chamber of Maes-howe, again, is constructed of long slabs of stone. They are laid down one on another as the enclosures of a square. For six feet up there is on each side a perpendicular wall, but then begins the special device of the architect for closing it in above. The stones, which hitherto have been of miscellaneous length, are now long slabs or beams of the full length of the side. This, however, shortens with each course, so that the square converges, making a rectangular dome. The stones are hewn, and in fact the whole is neat masonry.

The excavators were delighted to find several cuttings on the stone, and especially a series of runic inscriptions, whence it was anticipated that a flood of light might be thrown upon the origin of this and other works of the kind. They were examined by the most distinguished adepts in Northern learning. The result, however, has hitherto afforded no revelation concerning the purpose and the builders of the great work. Little more, indeed, was proved than that a prevailing weakness of the present day was exhibited several hundred years ago among the few whose education enabled them to give effect to it. The runes appear to have been the effusions of travellers and other persons seized with the same desire, compounded of vanity and vacuity, that induces modern tourists to engrave their names and make other mischievous cuttings on remarkable objects. Vikings, in their idle hours, seem thus to have amused themselves,

leaving boastful expressions about prowess, probably intended to meet eyes that would be irritated by them. There are several taunts and lamentations about the caprices of a fair widow, and some persons called Jerusalem men are supposed to have been crusaders on their way home. The runes are in themselves ancient, but they give only the light of their own day, and tell us no more of the previous history of the stones they are cut on, than Byron's name scratched on the walls of Chillon will reveal to future ages about the origin of an edifice built probably about the time when the Maes-howe runes were scratched.*

We are driven back to the mere structure and character of the edifices for any conclusions; and here, though analogies are but poor helps on such occasions, one cannot avoid observing that these works look as if they were bred of the same spirit that raised the Egyptian pyramids—the same, but impoverished and restricted. In both there is the accumulation of masses of stone-work far out of the proportion of what is necessary for the construction of the chambers retained in them, which look rather like excavations into the solid rock than buildings raised by laying stone on stone. In fact, New Grange and Maes-howe may justly be called minor pyramids.

The traces of the original purpose of such great works are thus sometimes obliterated by their very eminence. Age after age is attracted towards them, meddles with them, and leaves its mark on them. If the remains of the dead be found in them, it cannot thence be inferred that they were built for tombs, since

* Notice of Runic Inscriptions discovered during recent investigations in the Orkneys, made by James Farrer, M.P.

remarkable objects, natural as well as artificial, have often been selected as places of burial. It is satisfactory, however, to come to a clear conclusion about the smaller cairns or heaps of stones. The frequency with which the remains of the dead have been found in them, and their inadequacy to any other conceivable purpose, make them as certainly graves as the mounds in a village churchyard. Mistakes have sometimes been made by searchers in heaps of stone which have been accumulated by improvers of the land, but experienced explorers soon get to distinguish these from the primeval cairns. It is difficult to say where they are most numerous. In the carse-lands, and other places long cultivated, they are hardly known; and we may say the same of the upper mountain districts of the Highlands, which must have been so scantily peopled as to have few dead to dispose of. They abound chiefly in the pastoral districts of the centre and north. In Forfarshire and the lowlands of Perthshire there have been districts dotted with cairns, in which it is remembered that any one desirous to possess remains of the ancient dead could dig and find what he wanted with tolerable certainty, if they had not been disturbed by earlier investigators.

There are two great divisions in the character of these remains. In some the bodies seem to have been put into coffins or chests made of slabs of stone. Sarcophagus used to be the name given to the stone coffin when its use among the ancient classical nations was discussed; but our later archæologists have kept the native name of cist for those found in Britain. They are of many grades of elaborateness; some are boxes of mere rough slabs held together by the surrounding

earth; in other instances there is a trough hollowed in a great stone. Rare and curious instances, too, occur where the sculptures, peculiar to Scotland and so puzzling, with which we shall have to do hereafter, are found engraven on the cist. In several of those cut out of stone there is a round hollow for the head, and otherwise the cavity is cut to conform in some measure to the shape of the body. These, however, are never found in cairns or works of the kind we have hitherto had to deal with; they are generally found about ecclesiastical buildings, and appear to belong to the Christian era.

The other method of disposing of the dead is by burning, and preserving a due portion of the ashes in an urn. These urns are very numerous, and have been objects of much research and discussion. Sir Thomas Browne, musing over some burial urns and their contents, says, "Who were the proprietors of these bones, or what bodies these ashes made up, is a question above antiquarism, not to be resolved by men, nor easily perhaps by spirits, unless we consult the provincial guardians or tutelary observators."[1] We are perhaps no nearer an answer to his special question, yet can we answer other questions about such things—questions which his age lacked the wisdom to ask. Then, and long afterwards, every urn picked up used to be considered Roman, or of Roman origin. When the texture was extremely coarse and the form unshapely, it was supposed to be a feeble effort of the original inhabitants to imitate the productions of the civilised conquerors. We know that the urns are found over great districts of Northern Europe, where the Romans never trod,

[1] Hydrotaphia, 72.

and the fabric and its funereal use seem to have established themselves on so wide and enduring a basis, that whatever else may have been its source, the mere imitation of Roman manners as those of a cultivated nation would be too feeble to account for it. It is more likely, on the other hand, that Rome was influenced by the pressure of customs extending far beyond her own dominions. It is in itself a curious coincidence that, as in Italy, so in the northern nations, complete burial was the earlier method of disposal, and burning the later; and more unlikely opinions have been held than this, that Rome conformed to some great custom, and did, in her own gorgeous and refined manner, what her northern neighbours did penuriously and barbarously.

There remain many questions to be answered; for, as the disposal of the dead seems all over the world to be among the most interesting and exciting of all objects to their survivors, so have the vestiges of them become the objects of the keenest curiosity to later ages. The extent of the unknown which each discovery exposes is generally larger than its own revelation. We know that a practice is not merely a Roman one, taught to Roman colonists, but covers a far wider space: yet in this we are let loose from the age in which it prevailed, and have to wander over all time. There is nothing to tell us when the urn system commenced, even though we may admit the belief that it succeeded complete interment.

A good many minor specialties have been established which give distinctness to the usage. In some instances the urn has been placed within a cist or rude stone box, but more generally it is simply protected by the disposal of the surrounding stones. The Romans set

their urns upright, but the prevailing practice of the northern nations was to fill the urn with ashes, then invert it, and place it on a slab—sometimes on a flat circular vessel or saucer made to fit round the mouth. Urns are sometimes found in groups, and it has been matter of speculation whether a cairn containing a considerable number of them may have been a family burying-place, like the columbarium of an eminent Roman house, in which the ashes of the successive members of the family were placed each in its appropriate cell, while the freedmen and even the favourite slaves had also their place.[1] It has been suggested that these groups are combatants who have fallen together in battle, and that the spaces covered with funeral cairns are to be counted battle-fields rather than graveyards. Another supposition is, that when a great man died, certain dependants were slaughtered and burned along with him, that he might have a becoming array of attendants in whatever world he was going to. The bones of horses and dogs found along with the urn are supposed to point to the same conclusion; and a like care for the future state and condition of the dead is supposed to account for the waste of valuable movables by their entombment along with him.

The urns are of various sizes—from the contents, say, of an imperial gallon downwards. Some have been baked in ovens, but others, perhaps the greater portion, merely dried in the sun. They all aim at the circular

[1] "I could not but observe that this tumulus had been the ordinary burying-place of a particular family, since it appeared that the urns had not been placed there at one and the same time: those at the top and sides had no doubt been placed after those at the bottom, otherwise I cannot conceive a good reason why they are not found standing together." —Gordon, Iter. Sept., Ap. 171.

shape. There are many so far from achieving it, that the potter's wheel was evidently unused by the makers. Again, there are some so perfectly round, that if the maker had not the assistance of the wheel his own cunning of hand must have been very marvellous. They are various in their decorations, but within narrow limits; indeed, the ornamental efforts hardly go beyond the simplest geometrical forms. The zigzag is the most common; it is raised by string courses, sometimes by strings of small circles or squares. It is perhaps little to the point to say that there is nothing in them approaching the beauty achieved by the Roman pottery; but it may be worth remarking, as a closer point of difference, that they afford nothing that resembles or emulates the mysterious sculpture on stones which we shall presently have to deal with. Nothing has been found in these cairn-graves indicating a homage to Christianity. It has been inferred, indeed, and with reason, from all their conditions, that at whatever time they may have ceased they did not continue to be used among Christians.

Thus, though we have no limit on the earliness of the period when the practice commenced, we have some on the period of its conclusion. Hence the actual age in the chronology of the world of urn-burial is thrown so far back. Some worthy efforts have been made by a process of comparative analysis to fix, as it were, the proportional periods in man's advancement to which urn-burial belongs, as distinct from that of its predecessor, complete interment. In other words, inquiry has been made through existing vestiges into what other commodities man possessed and made at the time when the practice of burning

his body and consigning his ashes to the urn was in vogue.

As of all other useful practices, there are abuses as well as uses in analysis; and before we have finished with the cairns and raised mounds, an instance must be mentioned where it was pursued with more zeal than good result. The barrows or earthen mounds, scattered here and there over England as well as Scotland, were many of them of great size, and offered interesting varieties as well as uniformities of shape. This led the early antiquaries to try what would come of grouping them according to such specialties. Sir Richard Colt Hoare, the great antiquary of the south of England, took to this work with his usual zeal, and had the happiness to complete the classification. He divided the barrows into fourteen different shapes or classes, and gave each its proper technical name,—as the Bowl barrow, the Crowned barrow, the Conoid barrow, the Druid barrow, and so on. He set forth his system in his magnificent volume on Ancient Wiltshire, and accompanied it with the necessary diagrams, all prepared with the highest skill and the most enduring patience. The machinery was now all in readiness for considering the social and ethnical conditions which must have been appropriate to each class. The arrangements had scarcely been completed, however, when the geologists pounced upon the most special and significant members of the classification as representing the diluvial creation of departed waters, and hence coming within their own department. The uniformity of feature, indeed, which separated certain groups from others which had their own distinct uniformities, was the doing of nature, not of man; and

thus the most remarkable of these phenomena, both for their size as intimating earnestness of purpose, and for their uniformity as indicating a common object and feeling in their structure, were liable to be taken out of the category of archæological data.

In an analysis and classification of the smaller and movable relics of the past, there was no risk of incurring such a misfortune; but it may be a question whether analysis has not been pressed by the modern school of archæologists so far, that they have asked from the method knowledge which it is not capable of imparting. Recording minute differences and similarities is an innocent and often a useful pursuit, but it is not always productive of great and significant results, and to attempt to bring these forth when the elements of them do not exist is hardly helping on the truth.[1] Many an ambitious pursuit of grand conclusions has incidentally developed valuable truths on its way; and those who have expected to make out a system by the classification of northern remains, have at least established many subsidiary facts which are valu-

[1] The value of the most patient and skilful analysis, and of corresponding qualities in the arrangement of the results, must depend on what the materials analysed have to disclose; and it is part of the genius of the discoverer to foresee that there are results to be brought out worth having. Linnæus and Cuvier, each of them before he set to work, saw that he had to deal with the elements of grand distinctions and uniformities. If one were to examine a hundred thousand old shoes, or as many exhausted thimbles, doubtless the industrious analyser could make out many minute differences, both in the structure of the articles and the method in which they might have been used or worn; but it is unlikely that the world would be much the wiser, even if nearly every separate shoe revealed some peculiarity of the structure of the foot that had worn it, or the habits of its owner. Yet when there is a point to be made out, such investigations may be important—an analysis of shoes or shoe-prints has led more than once to the detection of a murder.

able knowledge in themselves, and would lead to more. If for these alone, the labours of the adepts deserve respectful examination and commemoration. But as there are many who may concur in this limitation of their services, it seems proper to give some account, however imperfect, of their broader conclusions, and the data on which these are founded.

Let us suppose, then, that the archæological philosopher has before him the many relics of antiquity, great and small, to which the foregoing brief notice refers: there are some others yet to be added, and then, whether or not he has all he would desire, he has at least all that is granted as the basis of his conclusions; and it may here be as well to say generally that the tenor of these conclusions is to develop several steps in civilisation and progress succeeding each other, and to identify the races of man, in whose handiwork they are exemplified.

And first there comes forward a set of relics totally different from all the others in their original nature, and the results to be drawn from them. These are the bones of the dead—the relics of the actual men who worked upon the other relics, and left them what they are. If there are distinct results found here, of course all others are subsidiary to them. If the skulls, for instance, make a distinct announcement of the capacities and any other specialties of the men of whom they formed a part, then the weapons, decorations, buildings, tombs, and other relics of these men, are only so many specimens or samples of their natural handiwork.

The fathers of this special application of human physiology belong to Scandinavia. Their inquiries have been joined by a few Germans, and lately, though

with moderated ardour and belief, by some eminent British inquirers. I am so far from professing to be able to deal with the doctrines expanded by these learned persons, that I would despair of being able even to give an intelligible abridgment of them—that is to say, an abridgment in which I could answer for having fairly rendered the sense of the original inquiries. Passing on, then, to the rest of the testimony derived from the works of men, I shall here content myself with three passages from the work of one well capable of speaking with such authority as the science he expounds is capable of conferring. The reader whose curiosity is aroused by these fragments will know where to find the whole.[1]

[1] These passages are taken from the second edition (1863) of Dr Daniel Wilson's 'Prehistoric Annals of Scotland.' (i. 232-251). The first passage is the best abbreviate I could find of the larger conclusions of the Scandinavian inquirers:—"The archæologists of Northern Europe, dealing with the traces of former ages less complicated by later intrusive elements than those of the British Islands, or of the continent of Europe lying within the compass of Roman dominion, have classified the primitive inhabitants of Scandinavia into three successive races, distinguished by their works of art, their modes of sepulture, and their physical conformation, the last of which they alone regard as of Celtic origin. Of the previous allophylian colonists, the learned Swedish naturalist, Professor Nilsson, assigns to the most ancient the short brachycephalic form of cranium, with prominent parietal tubers and broad flattened occiput; and this he infers, from their implements and other remains, to have been a nomade race of hunters and fishers. To these, he conceives, succeeded another race, with a cranium of more lengthened oval form and prominent narrow occiput, who devoted themselves, in part at least, to agricultural pursuits. The third race, which Scandinavian antiquaries incline to regard as that of the metallurgists by whom the bronze or first metallurgic period was inaugurated, is characterised by a cranium longer than the first and broader than the second, and marked by greater prominence at the sides. This younger, but greatly superior race, Professor Nilsson at first conceived to have been of Celtic origin; but more extended observation has increased his doubts as to the determinate form of the true Celtic cranium; and in his most recently published speculations he favours the idea of Phœnician influence being the direct

We come next to the subsidiary articles—the mere commodities—dug out of the earth, or found in the ancient works of which we have been speaking. As

of the Scandinavian as well as the British metallurgic art of the Bronze Age. Professor Anders Retzius and other Scandinavian ethnologists have followed out the same investigations with laborious zeal. The idea generally favoured points to the intrusion of the true Scandinavian race, and the first workers of the native iron ore, at a comparatively recent date; and the further the investigations of northern archæologists have been extended, their convictions have been the more strongly confirmed as to the traces of extinct races of man, compared with which, those supposed to be of Celtic origin belong to a very modern period. Professor Eschricht assigns to the crania from the barrows of the oldest Danish series an ample and well-developed form, with the forehead vaulted and tolerably spacious, and the nasal bones prominent. In a skull described by him the zygomata appear large and angular, and the cranium has somewhat of a pyramidal form. The eyes have been deeply set, and the eyebrows are strong and prominent. One of the most remarkable features of this class of skulls is their round form, approaching to a spherical uniformity."

In the following passage the materials coming specially to the author's hand are described:—"Deducting from ancient crania found in Britain those obtained from Roman or Scandinavian graves, or otherwise clearly pertaining to such foreign invaders, the remainder may be classed under four distinct heads:—1*st*, Such chance-found crania as have already been referred to, recovered from mosses, caverns, mine-shafts, and the like deposits of indeterminate antiquity; and therefore supplying, for the most part, no other clue to their classification than what may be deduced from the significance of their forms. 2*d*, Those derived from chambered barrows or cairns, cromlechs, and megalithic cists; all of which appear to be the rarely-constructed mausolea of the earliest period of regular sepulture. 3*d*, Those found in ordinary cairns, barrows, and cists, including both graves marked only by non-metallurgic sepulchral deposits, and others in which bronze and even iron relics afford proofs of the introduction of the metallurgic arts; and, 4*th*, Those obtained both from Pagan and Christian Anglo-Saxon and Anglo-Scandinavian barrows and cemeteries. Of graves or works of art of the Anglo-Saxon Pagan period, the examples hitherto found in Scotland have been exceedingly few, notwithstanding the extension of the ancient kingdom of Northumbria so far within its limits; and for that department of craniological illustration of ethnic characteristics we must turn to the richer fields of English research. But in the north of Scotland, and in the northern and western islands, the cemeteries and works of art both of the Pagan and Christian Northmen abound; and the intelligent research of recent

among these the most important were forts and other warlike works, so among the portable relics the most prominent are weapons of war. The most characteristic

years has greatly extended the materials for the illustration of this department."

The result of the classification made from these resources is thus summed up:—"The results of my first investigations into the physical characteristics of the earliest races of North Britain, appeared to me sufficient to establish the fact that the Aryan nations, on their arrival, found the country in the occupation of allophylian races, by whom the wilds of Europe had already been reclaimed in part for the use of man. Still further, I was led to conceive—contrary to the conclusions of Continental investigators of the same evidence in relation to Northern Europe—that the earliest Scottish, and indeed British race, differed entirely from that of Scandinavia, as defined by Professor Nilsson and others; being characterised by the markedly elongated and narrow cranium, tapering equally towards the forehead and occiput, already referred to here under the name of kumbecephalic or boat-shaped skull. It is a form by no means peculiar to Britain. The same contour of the coronal region characterises the Ben-Djemma skull, one of peculiar interest in the Mortonian Collection, from the island of Malta, and which Dr Morton is said to have regarded as the complete embodiment of the Phœnician type of head. It is described by Dr J. Aitken Meigs, in his catalogue of that collection, as 'a long oval, which recalls to mind the kumbecephalic form of Wilson;' and naturally suggests to the mind the possibility of Phœnician traces being thus discernible in the contents of the chambered barrows of Wiltshire and Devon. It will be seen, however, that such crania are by no means confined to the south-western counties of England; while they appear to be accompanied there, as well as in the northern barrows, only with the rude inartistic implements of the Stone Period. It is perhaps of more importance to note the approximation to the same elongated dolichocephalic type of the remarkable skull recovered by Dr Schmerling from the Engis Cavern on the left bank of the Meuse, buried five feet in a breccia, along with the tooth of a rhinoceros and other fossil bones. Its frontal development is long and narrow, and its greatest relative proportions in length and breadth are 7.7 by 5.25 inches, so that it corresponds in those respects to the British kumbecephalic crania.

"Researches such as those which led to the discovery of the Engis skull have wonderfully modified the incredulous surprise with which the idea of races older than the Celtæ was first received; and indeed, so rapid has been the progress of this department of archæological inquiry, in its relation to geological investigations, that the theory of a pre-Celtic race of British Kumbecephali, which in 1851, when the first edition of this work appeared, was challenged by critics as alike extravagant and un-

of these are made of stone—with very few exceptions, of flint. They are chiefly in the form of arrow and spear heads, and of hatchet-blades, which may have either been used as warlike instruments or for cutting wood There are other utensils of flint, but these are the most prominent; and in Denmark, where the relics are the same, but are so much more abundant as to offer greater variations, there have been found swords, knives, and even saws. In bronze, or other mixed metals on a basis of copper, there have been many weapons found in Scotland beyond doubt very ancient, and they have to be considered with the specialty that no tin or other amalgam suitable for hardening copper is known to be found in Scotland. The natural inference is, that the weapons have been imported, or left in the country by enemies who had fallen in battle. But, again, this is met by the fact that moulds or matrices for the casting of these weapons have been found —in one instance the completed duplicate, so deep in a moss in far Ross-shire as to lead to the supposition that it dates back to a period long before the days of the Romans.[1] The most remarkable of these weapons is a small sword, double-edged, expanding from the handle towards the centre, and then narrowing rapidly to a long sharp point. Nothing can be finer than the simple sym-

tenable, is already regarded as dealing with the characteristics of a people altogether recent when compared with the Drift-folk, and the Troglodytes of post-pliocene ages. The increase in the amount and precision of evidence relative to the physical characteristics of the earliest British races whose remains have been recovered from places of regular sepulture, has placed the question on a very different footing from that which it occupied, when the whole available materials were of the scantiest description, and it was mainly due to the zeal of the phrenologist that a single ancient Scottish skull could be referred to."

[1] Wilson, Prehistoric Annals, i. 345, 346.

metry of its outline, which, with great exactness, conforms to the leaf of that variety of the iris plant which is called gladiolus, after the Latin *gladius*. The sword is a small weapon, and the space left between the slight projections for a handle shows that it must have been held by a very small hand. Two things are remarkable about these weapons. They are as unlike as can well be to the long pointless swords which Tacitus tells us the Caledonians used. The next peculiarity is, that until late times such swords were always set down as Roman. They have, however, been found in regions where the Romans certainly never were—not only in the far north-west Highlands of Scotland, but in Ireland and Scandinavia.

Frequent among the bronze articles are hatchets, either for warlike or peaceful use. These also were long set down as Roman, on account of their being made of bronze; but they were admitted earlier than the swords to be works of native manufacture, and in token of the admission they have been called celts. They are in general very fine specimens of workmanship, and they vary in size and shape, and in the methods of fastening them to their handles. Another article in bronze of which there are many specimens, is a spear-head. It is somewhat of the shape of two narrow sharp-pointed knives joined at the back—sometimes it has the outline of the myrtle-leaf. Of whatever shape, it is very thin, having a ridge down the centre for strength. The thin parts are sometimes perforated with symmetrical devices. Rarely found, but perhaps in themselves the most remarkable of personal relics of warfare in Scotland, are round shields of bronze, very beautiful and accurate in their construction. The outer

surface has an appearance of very rich decoration, from the simple device of a number of concentric circles—some twenty or so—consisting each of a string of beads or knobs and a raised moulding. From the centre there is a protrusion called an umbo, corresponding to a hollow, within which a hand grasped a handle. The shield was thus held with one hand in the centre, and hence was essentially the defensive armour of a light-armed soldier, who shifted it from place to place as his risks required. It was an entirely different device from the Roman shield or scutum, which was so large as to cover the whole body when the knee was bent, and required to be strapped on the arm with a double loop. The proper structure of the scutum was oblong, with a curve outwards which made it a section of a cylinder; and the shields thus constructed were so fitted to each other that a compact body of men could adjust their shields over their heads in a complete roof, forming the protection from the missiles of the enemy known by the names of the testudo or tortoise. The Roman shield was perhaps originally round or oblong like the Greek clipeus, but both were large, not held in the hand, but by the arm, and thus were a different instrument from the light round guard held in the hand, of which specimens have been found in Scotland and in the rest of Britain.[1] A variety of implements and domestic utensils made of bronze have been found. Among these are some large well-made cooking-pots, which must either be Roman or of comparatively late date, unless we suppose that the inhabitants coeval with the cairns and burying-urns had

[1] See a full notice of the several discoveries of these bronze shields by W. T. M'Culloch, Proceedings of Scot. Antiquarian Society, v. 165.

cooking-vessels of the same character and standing in the same tripod fashion with the Carron ware used in modern kitchens.

Of ornaments, several made of bronze have been found, but the most interesting are those made of gold, of which a good many have survived the obvious peril incident to so precious a material. In a country where gold exists it is a necessity almost of its geological condition that it should be the first metal to come into use for the purpose of ornament. It runs in veins through the quartz rocks, and is of a tenacious and cohesive quality, so that when the rocks are broken through natural or artificial causes, the gold veins come together and coagulate into lumps called nuggets. Thus in an undisturbed gold district nature has been, as it were, working out the gold for unknown ages, and hence the facility, which has been fatal to many, of reaping the earliest seductive harvest of the gold-field. A considerable amount of gold has been in later times taken out of the earth in Scotland, though it is questionable if it ever paid the price of its extraction in its own exchangeable value. The portions thus laboriously realised tell that, by the first comers, a certain amount of pure gold must have been picked up, and account for the frequency of the remains of golden ornaments and the simplicity of their form. Many of them have no more work expended on them than the twisting or plaiting of the ductile metal.[1]

[1] A common form among the golden ornaments is a bracelet of the simplest possible structure. A narrow slip or ribbon of gold is first made; it is about one-eighth of an inch in breadth. It is then twisted round the axis of one of its edges—not twisted closely, but with longish stretches. I have seen one of these, taken out of a tumulus and merely cleaned, outstrip in simple beauty, as a feminine decoration, all the ornaments in a

Many ornaments have been found made of silver decorated with gold, and of silver alone. Conspicuous among these is the brooch, which has become almost a national ornament. For the purposes of holding heavy folds of loose clothing it is most effective in its pristine shape—a frame, circular or of any other outline, with a tongue or pin crossing and overlapping. The circle became the prevailing shape. This was never quite lost in Scotland, and has been lately restored as a fashionable ornament, insomuch that the specimens found in the sepulchral cairns provide the shapes which enterprising makers of trinkets hold it desirable to imitate. The ancient brooch was decorated with a profuseness which modern producers dare not rival, the customs of the times not admitting the use of ornaments so massive. Among other forms, the circle sometimes bristled all round with tall cylinders or pillars topped with coloured rock-crystal or some other ornamental stone. In some instances one side of the circle was broadened and covered with filagree-work or gems, while the rest of the circle, where the pin was attached, was plain and narrow. Decorations have been found of other material than the precious metals. Some are cut in bone, or stones which have tempted the workman more by their being easily wrought than by their beauty, such as the marbles and serpentines. Native amber, found on the sea-coast, and some of the harder

drawing-room. While of pure gold, which carries its own claims, it was simple and graceful in shape. A goldsmith with as much of the metal at his disposal would have thought it his duty to make the most of it, by a pattern which would spread it over the largest available surface; hence the barbarism of the existing style of finery, in which forms are not selected on their own account, but because they serve to expand the surface of the precious metal, and make a tiny piece of gold do service for a heavy and consequently a costly mass.

of the coal formations—which may be called jet—have helped out these relics of ancient finery. Glass, sometimes exceedingly brilliant in its colour, and porcelain, have helped. What is still less easily accounted for, enamel has been found set into bronze or brass ornaments; and the instances in which it has been found have accounted for hollows in other ornaments of a like kind, by making it evident that they have been the sockets of enamels that have dropped out.

Ornaments of the kind here referred to have been found in such numbers that attempts have been made to group them according to a sort of ethnical origin, and especially to separate those of Celtic from those of Scandinavian workmanship. It is a question, however, whether these ornaments teach us so much about the country in which they are found as do the weapons and the heavier relics. Such articles possess, as we have already seen, a faculty for travelling. We know that the earliest of the northern rovers frequented the coast of Scotland, and their coming and going dispersed commodities and interchanged those of different countries somewhat as the business of the peaceful trader does. Scotland had thus not only models from other countries, which her own artists could imitate, but doubtless many of the objects which some of her people were lucky enough to get possession of, were the produce of arts of which there were no native practitioners. A curious incident of late occurrence shows how beautiful and valuable possessions might pass to the wild northern region. In the year 1858 there was found in a rabbit-hole in the sand at Skail Bay, in the parish of Sandwick, in Orkney, a deposit of silver ornaments, weighing in all some sixteen pounds. They

may now be seen lying all together in the Museum of the Scottish Antiquaries. They consist chiefly of brooches in the Scotch fashion, but so large and so beautifully wrought as to leave in distant insignificance all those found on the mainland. This pose is with seeming reason supposed to have been a pirate's booty, hidden in the sand to await the opportunity for removal which never came. In what part of the world these magnificent ornaments were made is a mystery. That they are not native is evident from their size and beauty, speaking of a country which must have attained a degree of civilisation and riches far beyond what other evidence entitles us to claim for Scotland. That they should at the same time exhibit the style of work long afterwards practised in Scotland, and believed to be very ancient, adds to the mystery by supplying a specimen of the models which the Scots workmen seem to have imitated without telling us whence such models came. Before dropping the subject of personal decorations, let it be noted that a few small silver brooches and pins found buried in the mainland assert themselves as native works by having engraved on them the special and unmistakable ornamentation of the sculptured stones which we shall have to deal with as peculiar to Scotland.

In the attempts already mentioned to establish a historical sequence from the characteristics of ancient vestiges, these baubles have a small place in comparison with the implements which show how the serious business of life was carried on, and especially with those which illustrate the most important business of all, the method of making war. In these sequences, indeed, the brooches and other personal decorations drop into

the latest period, except that the golden ornaments of simple workmanship may belong to an earlier.

These sequences have been reached by a method thoroughly philosophical, according to old rules, in as far as the first process has been an extensive analysis of phenomena, and the next an induction from the results of the analysis. In this way it has become a doctrine that the northern nations went through three stages or periods—the stone age, the bronze age, and the iron age. The names almost carry their own explanation with them, and nothing can be more simple than the theory of succession, if we had any reason to suppose that it went on quietly without great revolutions and migrations. Let us set out in the method of the moralists and political philosophers of the last century. Man, born with the wants of his race, and the ingenuity to supply them, seized the easiest means of accomplishing this end, and brought down his prey with weapons cunningly made of the most obvious material, the hardest of stones. By degrees he discovered the ores that could be melted, and finding that these furnished him with weapons more available and enduring, he abandoned the primitive stone implements, and cast his weapons and his tools in brass or bronze. A more powerful metallic servant next presented itself in the universal iron, which could be melted or welded—which could be bent and twisted to the nicest pattern—could take the sharpest edge—was elastic or obdurate as the workman pleased ; and hence this superseded the use of the less ductile metal.

The northern archæologists, however, knew that the day for such vague systems was over, and they had conceived a more ambitious project. Over how many

centuries the vestiges on which they constructed their theories ranged, they had no idea, nor had they any means of knowing what revolutions and changes of population might have occurred within the stretch of time. They proposed, however, to make the relics themselves tell all these things. Characteristics of various kinds they found among them, but the chief among them were the use of stone, of bronze, or of iron. By these, then, they proposed to range the others, and they believed that they could group together a series of other vestiges of human inhabitancy, which should be subsidiary to the main division—so the man of the stone period should be found to have left certain vestiges of a correspondingly early character, the man of the bronze period to have left others indicative of a stage onwards, and the iron-worker to have shown a corresponding step in advance when his surroundings were examined.

All that an onlooker can say about this ambitious project is, that it has not as yet succeeded. The premises at hand are not only far too narrow to justify conclusions so grand, but they scarcely agree in proving any small portion of what is demanded of them. It would have been something, for instance, if it could have been shown that bodies were buried whole during the stone period, and began to be burnt and urned with the bronze period; but the distribution of their vestiges does not show either that these two sets of stages tally with each other, or that the next gradation in the materials of implements accompanied any change in the disposal of the dead. Efforts to connect the classification of different kinds of sepulchral mounds with the changes of material have been equally deficient

in conclusiveness, and, indeed, are rendered utterly chaotic by the intrusion of the geological origin of many of these protuberances.[1]

The question whether such a gradation is likely to be made out, seems fairly open to consideration. What it tends to show is a progressive improvement in the races inhabiting the northern districts—a progressive improvement divided into distinct stages by the nature of the manufactures left behind them. Common experience renders it pretty safe to hold, that if a people are advanced enough to adopt, as a general practice, some great material improvement, such as the substitution of metal for stone, they will not drop it if let alone; the mechanical gain will be preserved even though the people should woefully degenerate in moral and intellectual condition. But it does not follow that a people who possess any given invention or improvement are superior in other elements of civilisation to a people who do not possess it. In Athens it would not be difficult at this moment to find the steam-engine and the printing-press; yet no one will venture to hold that the citizens of Athens at the present day are on a level in civilisation with the contemporaries of Alcibiades, who had not even gone so far in me-

[1] Out of about 250 interments examined by Sir R. C. Hoare in Wiltshire, 18 had instruments of stone, 57 had instruments of bronze, and 11 instruments of iron. Whoever wishes to examine with precision the results of a great number of excavatious, will find a large tabular comparison in Mr Lubbock's Prehistoric Times. The materials for making it up are chiefly found in Mr Bateman's account of his examination of upwards of 400 tumuluses. Care is taken to keep clear of the cases where the grave had been reopened and occupied by a second tenant, a practice not uncommon. In each instance the table expresses the condition of the remains, and separates the articles of stone, of bone, of bronze, of iron, and of pottery found beside them.

chanics as to know how to construct an arch; and so of Egypt, and many other countries of ancient renown. How are we to know what fluctuations have been among the northern nations—what arts they had, possessed and swept away with those who possessed them? It may be in our estimation a very narrow art, and indicative of meagre resources, the making of instruments of flint; but their maker would, if he could step forward among us, beat in his own special art any mechanician we can produce. A museum of stone weapons and implements raises one's notions of the capacity of the human hand to produce useful and symmetrical forms out of the most forbidding materials, without the aid of machinery, or even tools. The small arrow-heads abundantly found in the north of Scotland are exquisite morsels of hand-work. They are perfect barbed darts, sharp as a lancet, and each side with its proper barb the exact counterpart of the other, although the whole is made by mere chipping. There is evidence of advanced civilisation in their potency to injure, for from their construction it is pretty clear that, when properly sent home, they carried the barb into the flesh, while the shaft would easily part and leave it there.[1]

The project of founding a theory of distinct grades of

[1] These beautiful and mischievous-looking little weapons, some of them not above half an inch long, have naturally been the objects of superstitions and other credulities. They used, down to a late period, to be called by the country people elfry heads, or elf arrow-heads. There was a belief that when found they must be kept from light and air, otherwise the elves who were accomplished in their use might do mischief with them. The specimens in the well-executed plates of Hoare's Ancient Wiltshire are exactly the same as those continually found in Aberdeenshire.

The oldest and one of the best pictures of these arrow-heads is to be found in the "Theatrum Scotiæ" of Bleau's Atlas (xiii. 104), published in 1661. It is in the contribution supplied to that wonderful collection

progress on the deposits left in the earth by each race in succession, is a little too like the doctrine of the successions of strata which the geologists have been so successful in identifying through the organic deposits. But it is not very safe to take analogies from the laws of the material world, and apply them to mankind, with their self-will, their command of the whole world of reason and skill, and their inexhaustible varieties of character. The rise of one man pre-eminent in command for war or peace—the existence of a great inventor—would entirely break through the best-constructed laws founded on such data. In fact, nothing less is arrived at, if we carry out this theory, than that Positivism in the disposal of human affairs, after which Comte, Buckle, and others have laboured in vain. They, it is true, took the whole written history of the world as their data, while the northern archæologists have a field of their own, scantily supplied, but very uniform. It is true that a curious uniformity of mechanical production has been shown to prevail in regions far distant from each other. But if an ethnical philosopher had nothing else to deal with than the precise uniformity of the fashionable hat and tie of any one year in Paris, London, Vienna, St Petersburg, and Philadelphia, his conclusions might be very much at

by Sir Robert Gordon of Straloch, a Cavalier Aberdeenshire laird, well acquainted with country affairs. He is evidently in some measure affected by the mysterious suspicions of the country people about them. He says they are sometimes met with in the open fields and roads by mere chance—but they are never found when searched for. To-day, he says, you will find them where yesterday there were none, and in the evening where none were in the morning. He mentions two authenticated instances where persons of condition had found them sticking on their clothes, but observes that there are a multitude of fables about them not fit to be repeated in grave print. They bore then the same name as now—*hos vulgus patrio sermone* elf arrow-heads *vocant.*

variance with the profound differences in the constitutional and moral characteristics of these great cities.

Though there were more uniformity than there is among the established phenomena, they would be surely too narrow for conclusions so grand. They include only such of the manufactures of the ancient races as are durable and preservable. In mercantile phrase, they include the hard goods only, leaving textile fabrics and other elements of civilisation a blank. And even in their narrow limits one could show incidental inversions of their conclusions from modern facts. Basins, dishes, and vases made of stone, of course belong to the stone period; when men used bronze, they also found out the facility of making their vessels in the ductile clay which they could afterwards harden. But even in the present day there is a reaction towards cutting vessels out of stone, and that not only the easier-worked serpentines and marbles, but granite, porphyry, and chalcedony, and this from the great progress of mechanical power, which enables us to cut and turn these stones, and bring out the brilliant polish they are capable of taking. In concluding these remarks, it would be unworthy to forget that in pursuit of their theories the northern archæologists have made great discoveries, and given wonderful assistance to the classification of our knowledge as to the past inhabitants of Europe.[1]

[1] The bulk of the material of this part of his History the Author has derived from his own personal observation of the objects referred to—observations running pretty far back. He has not hesitated, however, to avail himself of the aid to be found in such works as Wilson's Prehistoric Annals. This book may be specially commended to those who wish to dwell on a topic which has charms for many. The reader who wants to have his knowledge closely packed like a soldier's knapsack may not like it; but to those who enjoy archæological exposition and exemplification, the discursiveness of the book is a great merit.

CHAPTER IV.

The Unrecorded Ages.

(Continued.)

OBJECTS SUPPOSED TO BE CONNECTED WITH RELIGION—STONE CIRCLES—OTHER UNTOOLED MONUMENTS—VASTNESS OF THE FIELD OF THE UNKNOWN AND CONJECTURAL—NARROWNESS OF THE KNOWN—DISCONNECTION OF THE UNWORKED WITH THE SCULPTURED STONES—THE SCULPTURES OF THE EAST AND OF THE WEST COAST—NATURE OF THE SEVERAL KINDS OF SCULPTURE—THEIR MYSTERIOUSNESS—SOLUTIONS OFFERED FROM AFAR—OTHERS NEARER HOME—CHARACTERISTICS AS A SCHOOL OF DECORATIVE ART—PROGRESS IN ENGLAND—WIDER DIFFUSION IN THE WEST OF SCOTLAND AND IRELAND—PASSES INTO THE ILLUMINATION OF MSS.—EXAMINED BY GERMAN CRITICS AS A SCOTTISH SCHOOL OF DECORATIVE ART.

It has been thought fit to reserve for separate notice those ancient memorials which, from peculiarities in their character, are supposed to have been connected with the worship of the people, or with other public purposes. It is convenient to look to these after all the other relics of the unrecorded ages have been exhausted, because they are a connection between the unrecorded and the historical period, carrying us insensibly over the one into the other. These memorials generally consist of great stones, some of them in the state of native rock, with no mark of man's handiwork on

them, and no evidence that they had been touched by man, except the artificial nature of their position; while others bear inscriptions, sculptures, and other testimonies to the hand of the workman. Unworked stone monuments abound in Scotland, and are found in all the arrangements into which they have been divided by archæologists, with so little to reward them for their analytical labours. We have the Circles, the Altars, the Cromlechs or groups of stones laid against each other and across, the Logans or rocking-stones, the Dolmens, and the Monoliths, as they have been lately termed, or great unhewn pillars standing alone. The most conspicuous groups are at Stenness in Orkney, and Callernish in the Lewis; but others are to be found more or less abundantly over all parts of Scotland, except the regions of the higher mountains. In the north they are found chiefly to abound near the east coast; but after crossing the Tay the preponderance is westward, and they are found in all their varieties on the diluvial plain between Lochawe and the Crinan Canal.

It would be wasteful to enter on a specific description of a class of monuments, the characteristics of which have been discussed at so much length by a succession of authors whose labours have been continued over nearly three centuries. The most observable specialty in the Scotch specimens is their infinite variety, which has driven almost desperate the inquirers who have expected to make the classification of specimens tell us how or for what purpose these mysterious monuments came into existence. The circles are single or multiplied; the latter are concentric and eccentric, without revealing any reason why they should so radically differ. While some groups are oval or elliptical,

others seem to aim at the pure circle. Among their eccentricities the great group at Callernish takes the shape of a cross, and might pass for a Christian monument if it did not bear the almost certain evidence of an antiquity far beyond the conversion of the people of the district, or even the Christian era itself.

It has been an established custom to characterise these monuments as Druidical, and to speak of them as temples, altars, and what not, used in their ceremonials by the Druidical priests. We shall presently see how far it is likely that there ever were Druids in Scotland. But though we should believe that the country swarmed with them, it would require separate evidence, of which there is not the smallest vestige, to prove that they had anything to do with these stone monuments. The early references to the existence of Druids in Northern Europe, and the present knowledge of the existence of these rough stone monuments, are two sets of phenomena which have nothing to do the one with the other. Between them there is a gulf fixed which has not been spanned, because the historical conditions out of which learning and sagacity could unite them have not been found to exist. It is possible to think that these grey monuments of long-buried generations draw more solemn associations from the dead mystery in which they are thus buried, than from the tawdry stage-decorations of Druidism—the white robes, the mistletoe, and the golden sickle.

Some forty years ago there arose a reaction against the Druidical theories, and a strong push was made to connect these rough monuments with the invasions of the Scandinavian nations. This view got incidental support from some facts, a feature of which the Druid-

ical theory was entirely destitute. High ground was taken, and from some of the descriptions of the old heathen temples in the Eddas, it was inferred that they were erected within great stone circles. A theory so ambitious had, however, to be abandoned. It was not only that the descriptions of the edifices very imperfectly conformed to the existing monuments, but the question arose, how was it that these were so rife in the more outlying provinces of the Scandinavian tribes, and so scanty in their central districts? Still there were facts connecting the Scandinavians with the island specimens of these monuments. The Ting, or local parliament, would be held within the circle: judicial combats were held there also. They were places of mark, in short, for public purposes.[1] This at the utmost, however, only showed the use they were put to as remarkable monuments, or, if we may use such a term, public buildings; it throws no light on their origin or its object. In later times we have evidence still more distinct of their having been put to use. The usual name by which such monuments have since very early times been known in their own respective districts is "The Stannin' Stanes," or standing stones; and by such a term they occur in old chartularies. For instance, in the year 1349, a certain William de St Michael and others, accused of usurping lands and rights belonging to the Bishopric of Aberdeen, are cited to appear at a court to be held at the

[1] The learning on this connection will be found at length in a "Memoir on the Tings of Orkney and Shetland," by Dr Hibbert, in the third volume of the Proceedings of the Scots Antiquaries. Even, however, in the evidence of these stone circles being employed as Dr Hibbert makes out, there is an unsatisfactory vagueness which it would be well to disperse if the matter were of higher historical importance.

Standing Stones of Rayne, in the Garioch, where not only the bishop and his retinue were to be present, but the King's Chief Justiciar benorth the Forth.[1] On the other hand, in the year 1380, the Bishop of Moray is cited to attend a temporal court at the Standing Stones of Rait, near Kingussie.[2] Where monuments of this kind exist, they are still remarkable things, known to the people in a wide circumference round them. They were probably still more notable in the fourteenth century, and hence were useful as marking sites for assemblages, so notorious that none cited to be present could plead ignorance of the place to which they were bound to go.

Another fact as to these monuments is, that in digging round them human remains have been found in abundance, attesting that they were selected as burial-places. But indeed, wherever in Scotland there are conspicuous monuments of unrecorded antiquity, we may calculate on finding evidence that it was the practice to bury the dead around them; and it would give us no help to the original question of why and by whom these stones were raised, to examine the specialties of every grave found under their shadow.[3]

An astounding light seemed to be let in upon the whole question by the recent assertion of an ambitious archæologist, that Silbury Hill, a member of the Avebury circle, stood upon part of a Roman road. But this

[1] Registrum Episcopatus Aberd., i. p. 80. They are to appear "ad unum diem legitimum per juris ordines ordinatum apud Stantes Lapides de Rane en le Garuiach."

[2] "Quod compareant coram nobis apud le Standand Stanys de la Rathe de Kyngucy."—Registrum Moraviense, 184.

[3] For an account of the results of numerous diggings at the roots of standing stones, see the Appendix to Mr Stuart's Preface to the Spalding Collection.

only roused the champions of the unfathomable antiquity of this class of monuments to expunge the heresy. It is almost humiliating to think that all the ingenuity and learning thrown into the inquiry establish no distinct suggestive fact more important than this, that the great circle of Stonehenge must to some extent have been worked upon with tools, since the cross lintels are grooved to fit them to the uprights; while the other specimens, whether groups or separate stones, seem to have been entirely untooled, and to have been set on end as they were found—tall boulders lying on the surface of the earth. Another fact of recent occurrence might be, but has not yet been, put to use as a test of the antiquity of this class of memorials. It has been already said that they are found on the most recent, according to geological series, of the formations deposited by agencies which have ceased to work. But in one instance, at least, the agencies still at work have overlaid the lower portions of the erection. From around the stones of the great circle of Callernish, in the Lewis, a deep accumulation of peat-moss was removed, and then several portions of the work not visible before were revealed. Like the removal of the rubbish from the ruins of a Gothic building, the removal of the peat-moss laid bare the original plan. If naturalists can see their way to the ascertainment of the rate of growth of peat-moss, they can tell us something about the age of the great circle of Callernish.

In the dearth of more instructive facts, it may be noticed that in Scotland the "Druidical Stones" are the frequent companions of the Chambered Cairns, and of the underground edifices called Picts' Houses; but if we attempt to derive any articulate conclusion from

this companionship, it resembles "deep calling unto deep."

The amount of research, the meditation, and the versatile mental labour wasted on these stones, resolve themselves into an interesting psychological phenomenon. They are in themselves a monument of how hard it is to convince man that anything is a dead secret to him. Among other efforts to solve this one, astronomy has been largely drawn upon; and we may judge of the many attempted solutions which have failed by the one or two coincidences that have been trumpeted as successes. Of the Callernish group in the island of Lewis we are told "that the position was chosen and laid down from astronomical observation, which can easily be demonstrated by visiting the spot on a clear night, when it will be found that, by bringing the upper part of the single line of stones extending to the south to bear upon the top of the large stone in the centre of the circle, the apex of that stone coincides directly with the pole-star."[1] In the present year, 1866, it has been announced with due solemnity concerning Stonehenge, that any one standing within the circle, "with his back to the altar stone, and looking towards the Friar's Heel, will see it through the principal entrance, and will find that in the morning of the 21st of June the sun rises exactly over it."[2]

It is useful to keep a distinct line of separation between these unhewn monuments and other stones abounding in Scotland, which bear abundant marks of human handiwork, and are known by the general title of "The Sculptured Stones." The separation is indeed

[1] Proceedings of the Antiquarian Society of Scotland, ii. 382.
[2] Gentleman's Magazine, N.S., ii. 317.

broadly marked by facts which leave no excuse for confusion. The two sets of stones are never mixed up with each other. For instance, it does not occur that in any of the groups or circles we have been discussing a sculptured stone holds a place among the unhewn blocks. None of these bear the touch of the tools which have so amply decorated the other class of monuments.[1] In fact, it would be difficult to find any two groups of material objects more powerfully in contrast than these two sets of stones,—the one all sullen silence and absolute mystery and apathy; the other, swarming with life and action, and dealings with the living world of their day. Looking at these, as we now can, grouped together, the crowding of life, the versatility of form and motion in them, much of it horribly grotesque, are positively tiring to the eye. Most conspicuous among the objects represented are of course scenes in the great drama of war. We have the parading of troops, on foot and on horseback; some in simple and imperfect garbs, but others in profusely-decorated armour, matched with rich horse-furniture. They have round shields, battle-axes, spears, swords, daggers, plain or decorated, and the common bow and arrow. Here is hand-to-hand contest, there flight and pursuit. In some cases there is an attempt to give the whole epic of a conflict. Banners and other ensigns are displayed. The surface of

[1] At Kinellar, in Aberdeenshire, a sculptured stone stands among the remnants of a circle of standing stones; but it appears that the sculptured stone was found elsewhere, and recently added to the circle.—See the Spalding Collection, Notices of the Plates; Plate X. As one must always speak to the letter in discussing these matters, it is necessary to say that the groove on the stone in the marketplace of Huntly has not been overlooked in the general conclusion announced in the text.

the stone is so crowded with parading troops that one feels it—as the artist doubtless intended—to be the centre of a wide and thickly-crowded battle-field, stretching all around. Then, in other compartments, come charging and fighting, fleeing and pursuing. There lies in one department of the field a row of headless bodies, and near at hand a pile of human heads, showing the fate of the vanquished. And finally, beneath the shadow of the cross, a group of men in peaceful attitudes has been supposed to be negotiating the conditions of a termination of the strife.

Hunting comes next in importance. There is the lonely stalker, with his bow and arrow taking aim at the deer or the boar. Again, the stone is alive with the blowing of horns and "horsemen riding upon horses"—sometimes with falcons on the wrist, at others with a following of lithe deer-hounds—such stirring scenes of sylvan life as artists of all ages have loved to render. Again comes a scene of still wilder stir and excitement. All the beasts of the field, large and small, ferocious and gentle, seem huddled together in panic-terror. It is a Tinchel or general sweeping of the contents of the district, according to a practice of the country down to the recollections of the existing generation. Man has not always the upper hand in these contests. You see him here surrounded by such a crowd of raging animals that his life seems doomed; elsewhere he is prostrate, and some beast of the wilderness is devouring him. Many types of domestic life and manners might be picked out of these memorials. Here are harpers harping upon their harps, and performers on

other musical instruments. A lady sits pillion-fashion on horseback. A chariot passes across the scene—it is two-wheeled, with the driver in front, and what may be a respectable family packed behind. Other hints are less pleasant, as indicating cruelty and violence. A bunch of human limbs, for instance, projects from a great caldron, where the punishment of boiling to death is going on, whether for civil or religious offence. One negative feature in this great mass of miscellaneous sculpture deserves to be noticed. There is nothing throughout suggestive of indecorum or sexualism — nothing of the character of those too suggestive representations which are so rife in classic art, and also in another shape in the decorations which the artists of the middle ages brought into the very sanctuaries of the churches. It deserves to be commemorated, that in the hundreds of specimens of native sculpture of this class recently brought to light, there is no single instance of indecency, while in the scanty remains of Roman art within the same area it would be easy to point out several.

There are certain figures on these stones holding state in dignified repose, and generally on elevated chairs or thrones. These are high ecclesiastics, as one may see by the tonsure, the pastoral staff or crozier, and the scapulary. It is observable that the mitre never occurs among such groups in the more ancient class of stones in the east country. There are processions of ecclesiastics and religious ceremonials. Some scenes, too, from Scripture are commemorated—as, for instance, the ravens feeding the prophet in the wilderness, the temptation of Adam and Eve, David's conflict with

the lion, and Samson slaying the Philistines with the jawbone.

For all the busy world of actual life which these stones bring before us, it is in some measure humiliating to reflect, that neither science nor research can tell us the event or occasion which any one of them commemorates, or the period when it was decorated. It must be noted, by the way, that the sculptured stones of Scotland are divided into two distinct, though, as we shall find, related groups—those of the eastern districts, and those of the western. It is the eastern group, by far the more ancient, that we have now before us. By Boece and the other fabulous annalists they have been confidently set down as commemorating events which are themselves discredited; but the workers in authentic history have not been so fortunate. The great Forres Pillar, which is the masterpiece of this school of art, and several other stones representing battle-scenes, are thus set down as memorials of specific victories over the Danes. By far the greater portion, indeed, of those war-memorials in Scotland which do not belong to the Roman period are connected with the Danes, tradition thus preserving a faint impression of that wild age, when the Northmen poured in upon the country torrent after torrent.

Some of these groups of sculpture are coupled with the romances which cluster round the memory of the legendary King Arthur. The parish of Meigle, in Forfarshire, is the spot most richly endowed with these monuments; and Boece tells us that they commemorate Arthur's false queen, here known by the name of Guanora, who fell a captive to the Picts in their con-

test with the Britons, and was imprisoned in a neighbouring tower by way of visitation for her crimes.[1] In several instances, diabolical or otherwise supernatural legends adapt themselves to the mythic devices and hideous imaginary animals which occur among these groups. The legend of a dragon holding a maiden in thrall until he is slain by a valiant knight, occurs more than once. One of the most ancient and unearthly of these stones, standing where the ascent of Benochie in Aberdeenshire commences, is known as the Maiden Stone for the following event, which would be told quite gravely by the neighbouring peasants: A damsel was busy making cakes for her bridal banquet, when she was addressed by a handsome stranger. Some bantering passed between them, which ended in a bet, that ere she had accomplished a certain portion of her task, her new admirer would make a road to the top of Benochie: if he kept his word, and performed this astounding feat, she agreed to abandon the lover for whose bridal she was preparing, and become his. The road was speedily made, as it may now be seen; and the maiden, seeing that the affair was no joke, took to flight. The handsome stranger, revealing himself in all the powers of the enemy of human souls, pursued. Just as he seized her she was turned into stone, and a notch cut out of the side of the monument represents a piece

[1] Gray the poet, when sojourning in Scotland, was struck by observing some of these strange monuments while he sojourned at Glammis Castle. Of one of them in the churchyard of Meigle, representing a human figure surrounded by animals whose deportment is not amicable, he says, "Passed through Megill, where is the tomb of Queen Wanders that was riven to dethe by staned horses for nae gude that she did,—so the women there told me, I assure you."—Works (1825), ii. 274.

torn from her by the deadly gripe of the disappointed fiend.

It has, of course, been anxiously sought how far the representations themselves upon these stones tell anything of their specific origin. Here close observation has dispelled some elements of mystery, but has done little more. It used to create astonishment, tinged with awe, that the figure of the elephant should appear on these northern monuments, and that, as it would seem, at some period earlier than that Punic war in which the Romans were astounded by the charge of the unwieldy monsters from the East. Those who professed to give transcripts of the sculptures, in obedience to a very common propensity, slightly aided the development of the elephantine characteristics, and thus helped out those tremendous theories which adjust the figures on these stones to various Oriental mysteries. But a closer acquaintance with the figure in question relieves us of the necessity of accounting for the influence of the great beast of the tropics upon the early Scottish mind. The characteristics which seem to point to him only mark deficiencies in the capacity of very rude art to give effect to its conceptions. The finishing of extremities is a difficulty in all struggling art. To relieve himself of it the artist finishes off with a flourish. In the present instance the tail goes off in a whirl, so do the legs, so does the snout, and hence it has been found to represent the elephant's trunk. The creature it belongs to is not more strange and uncouth than many others frequenting these monuments, and the terminal difficulty is still more grotesquely disposed of, sometimes by plaiting the tail or the snout off into a geometrical

pattern.[1] The serpent is a common representation on these stones, and seems very aptly to carry out the woven and knotted decorations in which they abound.

On some of these stones there are certain figures which have been called religious symbols, and as such have given rise to a deal of fruitless literature about Druids, Buddhists, and other strange persons. Had the figures appeared but once and again, there

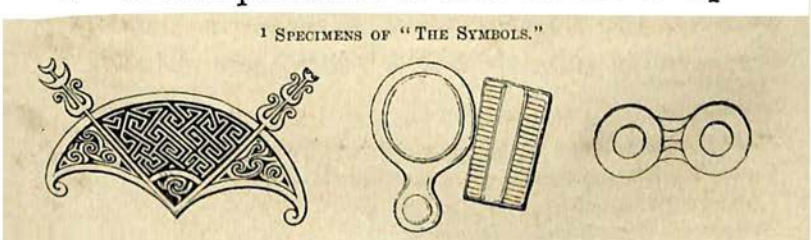
[1] For the unlikeness of the "elephant" on the Scottish stones to the real animal Mr Stuart gives an ingenious theory. Observing that the artist has generally more or less command over the anatomy and movements of other animals, he says, "The elephant of the Scotch stones cannot, however, be regarded as a likeness, but rather as a conventional representation of the animal; and the unvarying adherence to one form would suggest that the sculptors were unacquainted with the animal, and were not working from a traditional description—in which case we might have expected to find the same varying degeneracy as in the case of the Gaulish and British coins already referred to—but rather were copying a figure with defined form, like the 'spectacle' and 'crescent.' . . . The outline of the elephant continues the same even when the body becomes covered with ornament; and it seems to me to be worthy of remark, that while these ornamental scrolls and patterns which come to be used on the elephant, the crescent, and occasionally on the mirror, are like those used in illuminated Irish manuscripts, and in the filling-up of the *crosses*, these ornaments are not found on any of the *living* creatures in the accompanying pictures on the cross-slabs, from which we may perhaps be justified in concluding that the elephant represents an ornament or badge rather than a living creature."—Appendix to Preface, vol. ii. p. xii.

STONE AT BRODIE (ELGIN), WITH THE ELEPHANT AND THE SPECTACLE ORNAMENT.



would have been nothing to say about them; they would be the devices of the individual artists who cut them on the stone. In their simplicity they would have passed unheeded; but it is that very simplicity that artists notice when the same contour of line, straight and curved, is identified over hundreds of miles, and is found passing from the abstract simplicity of mere curves and lines into the outline or framework containing within it specimens of rich decoration. We must therefore deal with these figures, whether we give them popular or scientific names, not as the trick and fancy of an individual artist, but as forms which, for some purpose or other, were gregariously adopted; and the question remaining unanswered is, What that purpose was?

The popular names given to these figures describe them as well as any others that science can apply. They are "the sceptre," "the cocked-hat," or otherwise the crescent, "the spectacles," and "the looking-glass."[1] These occur in those of the stones which appear to be oldest in the series, and they are sometimes plain, sometimes decorated. It is certain that they appear exactly alike on stones separated from each other hundreds of miles in Scotland, but no specimens like them have as yet cast up in other countries. There are no means of contradicting the supposition that they owe their prevalence to some fashion or caprice



[1] Specimens of "The Symbols."

of the humble art of their age. At the same time, there are no means of contradicting the opinion, if people think proper to believe in it, that they are the symbols of some ancient worship anterior to Christianity. It would clear the way for this theory if they were never found in company with vestiges of Christianity; but they are to be found on stones which also give unmistakably the Christian symbol of the cross. The cross is sometimes plain, and sometimes decorated with other devices common to these sculptures; but it is a fact noticeable in its way, that the cross is never decorated with the symbols—the two stand separate from each other. This may go for what it is worth in support of the principle, that these representations are religious symbols; but indeed the spirit to theorise upon them in that understanding needs no special encouragement, and it has produced some of the most astounding parallels with the practices of distant Oriental nations which this kind of literature has ever displayed. The present Author cannot take on himself the responsibility of offering any estimate of this school of literature, as he is unable to find any more secure ground of discussion in it than in astrology, necromancy, alchemy, or any other of the obsolete sciences. The reader is, however, favoured in the notes with some passages from very recent works, which may or may not stimulate him to pursue the study of this department of literature in the several considerable volumes in which it is embodied.[1]

[1] "In the great temples of Elora, and several other Buddhist caves, Colonel Sykes found three circles traced in the same order as on the coins, two forming the basement, and one the apex. This is the symbolical representation of the Buddhist Triad, which is still more accurately traced on the Kinnellar Standing Stone in Aberdeenshire, which has

These extracts are taken from works decidedly respectable for their literary merit, and even for the acquaintance with occult learning shown in them. One

three circles placed in the same order as in the temples of Hindostan; and to mark still more intelligibly the Trinity in Unity, they are connected by another circle. This is the simplest form of the representation of the Trinity in Unity, and the crescent ornament underneath the circles in the Kinnellar Stone proves its identity with the other sculptured stones of Scotland. The most frequent form, however, of the Trinity on these stones is two circles, symbols of Spirit and Matter, united by a belt and crossed by a bar, to the extremities of which two sceptres were joined, to indicate the supreme power—according to the Buddhist creed, the co-ordinate and all-originating principle. This formed what has been called the spectacle ornament upon the stones of Scotland; while the third member of the Trinity, organised matter (Sangha), was represented near the others in the form of a crescent. Sometimes this third member is crossed by sceptres, to indicate the sovereignty of the laws which organic matter follows."

"The united circles bisected by the Z symbol are represented on some of the sculptured stones with seven other circles within each, and as we know that seven spheres are employed in the Buddhistic system to express the periods of the seven successive mortal Buddhas that have appeared in the world, we have some ground for the notion that they may in such instances be referred to. There is reason to believe that the various peculiar turns and markings attached to the V and Z symbols may possess especial meanings, since we find them in various connections on different stones, and in some instances they are so strung together that we can only imagine them to be readable as a kind of hieroglyphics. That they were in later periods blended with Christian symbols, and as distinct objects, is a proof that they were severally understood as symbolic themselves. In the case before us, the sign on the right extremity of the V symbol reminds us of the initial letter in the name of Godama, or Jodama, the last Buddha, as seen in certain inscriptions in the ancient Sanskrit character, while the sign on the opposite extremity resembles the figure significant of the holy mountain *Meru*, as represented on Buddhistic coins. The signs at the terminations of the Z symbol are doubtless significant of the power of Buddha in relation to punishment, since the Z symbol passes diagonally between the two united discs, or worlds, which we know have relation to future punishment. The double discs, or *chakrane*, is one of the symbols on the *Pra-Pat'ha*, or divine footprint of Buddha, and is the sign of the power possessed by Buddha to inflict punishment on the wicked in both worlds. It may here be observed, that most of the symbols on the more ancient sculptured stones

of them, indeed, is an extract from the Transactions of a very eminent scientific institution.

It seems unnecessary farther to identify the sources whence these passages are drawn, since it is by no means the author's intention to rely on them as valuable authorities. Yet are such treatises not entirely written in

of Scotland may be seen on one or other of the various impressions of Buddha's foot which represent his doctrines, as taught by different sects of his followers. That in the British Museum, which was brought from Burmah, has several of the symbols, which are carved on the sculptured stones, but the list of the symbols on the Siamese *Pra-Pat'ha* is somewhat different and more complete, the number of symbols amounting to a hundred and eight. To recite the meanings of these symbols in the footprint of Buddha forms the essential part of the priest's duty in his daily teachings before the worshippers in the temple. The meanings of the symbols are expressed in fifty metrical lines of eight syllables each, and are intended to convey, in a manner easy to be remembered, the moral and dogmatic doctrines of Buddha."

"It is highly probable that the Kirkmichael stone, now under consideration, was erected by a body of Cuthite priests, who came from Cutha, in Persia. After the dispersion of the ten tribes, the Cuthites were carried off from Cutha and other cities of that empire into Phœnicia by Salmanezar, king of Assyria; and their posterity were for the most part so called because the greater number came from the city of Cutha. Being intermixed with the Phœnicians, they introduced into their cities the worship of the idol Nergal—*i.e.*, the Dunghill cock. On the top of one side, or rather edge, of the Kirkmichael monolith is the effigy of this bird." (Intervening passage omitted, as containing Hebrew, which the author quoting does not understand.) "In the Vendidad Sádi, one of the works of Zoroaster, the great prophet or teacher of the Magian or Persian religion, he celebrates the cock, who, next to the angel Scrosch, is the guardian of the world, and secures mankind against the snares of the devil.

"Noah was denominated by the Babylonians Gallus, on account of his having been the means of preserving his family from the waters of the Deluge. The Romans also called the cock Gallus, either from this circumstance, or from its being the name of the Helioarkite deity Gal or Nergal."

"Next to the double disc and double-angled sceptre, the crescent and sceptre are the most prominent of Caledonian hieroglyphics, and are often found graven in the same monolith with the former. The handle

vain. Their authors perform a function in archæological inquiry, and exemplify the principle, that no honest labour is absolutely wasted. Had they not done what they have, there might have ever rested shadowy suspicions, that in some remote age or place the prototypes of these strange sculptures might be hidden.

of the sceptre which is united to the crescent forms only one angle, but is so placed as to pass through and leave both its ornamented ends projecting beyond the convex side of the crescent. The arguments employed in the preceding and other chapters strongly tend to the conclusion that this figure was an emblem connected with the worship of the moon, or some deity considered as its representative.

"Amongst the most ancient British coins two crescents connected at the extremity of their convex sides are not uncommon, and they appear on one of the sculptured stones found at Kintore, and in a mutilated form in a later semi-Christian sculpture.

"In Ceylon, Bali or planetary worship is still practised, and the circle and crescent, which may be seen graven on rocks, were placed as emblems of the sun and the moon, and when graven at the top of an ancient grant of land are also considered as representations of royalty and duration.

"The Druids called the mistletoe by a name having the signification of 'all-healing,' and when found growing on the oak, and cut by them with due ceremonies, at the proper time of the moon, it was believed to be endued with extraordinary healing properties. At the same time the Druids sacrificed to the moon white bulls that had never known the yoke.

"The moon, 'the Queen of Heaven,' was worshipped as Mithra, Ashtaroth, Astarte, Mylitta, Alitta, Aphrodite, Venus Urania, in Persia, Assyria, Arabia, Syria, Phœnicia, Lybia, along the whole coast of Northern Africa, and in Spain. The goddess was at first acknowledged by the simple emblem of a conical stone. In later periods, as Venus, she was worshipped in many places under various forms and different rites, and to her were ascribed the most opposite attributes. In some localities as the celestial Venus she represented light, or dignity, love, and purity; in others passion, licence, and obscenity; and with these worse characteristics, in later times, her worship seems to have been generally identified. In both these forms, contradictory as they are, the worship of Venus may, I think, be detected by the monuments and superstitions in the Celtic countries of Western Europe. It is not improbable that the celestial Venus with martial attributes, as she was worshipped by the Phœnicians and their Carthaginian colonists, had also a representative amongst the Celtic deities in Gaul and Britain, where it was brought into contact with, if it were not derived from, the religious system of the Phœnicians in Spain."

The ordinary sceptical and faithless inquirer would have shrunk from researches in Hindostan, Syria, or Egypt, among the Pelasgians, the Buddhists, the Brahmins, and the Zoroasterites. He would not have thought the chance of finding anything to the purpose in such quarters sufficient to justify researches so wide and vague, yet might have retained the unpleasant suspicion of the possibility of something being in them. To deal with these forlorn hopes required the faith and enthusiasm of those who believed, and would continue to believe, in spite of all lack of evidence. The consequence has been the clearing of a great deal of ground, and the bringing home a conviction, that nowhere on the globe have there existed any forms of sculpture from which these sculptures have been derived. In every attempt to establish identity or similarity, the absolute difference has been established beyond cavil. Such is the involuntary assistance lent by this class of writers to archæological knowledge.

There has been, however, even among those whose theories are less ambitious, an obstinate propensity to hold it for granted and undeniable, that all the unidentified forms on these stones are symbols, and that they symbolise something deep and mysterious in creed or worship. There is a deep-seated reluctance to believe that our remote ancestors trifled or dealt in common and vulgar things like ourselves. But a deal of art has been thus applied, and the school of decoration called the arabesque was peculiarly addicted, even in Raphael's hands, to the commodities, animal and vegetable, on which the human species feed. Since there is so much of the common world of their time undoubtedly represented on the faces of these stones,

why must we necessarily suppose that all we do not recognise as familiar must be holy and sublime? The accurate precision of recent transcripts has already made a distinct invasion on the mystery of these "symbols," by showing that we have, in frequent occurrence among them, the looking-glass, the comb, and the shears. Of the region of the unknown, thus somewhat narrowed, it seems unnecessary to seek a solution much further from home.[1]

It would be deemed by some unpardonable not to note that some scratchings on these stones have been set down as inscriptions in the Ogham or Ogam character. This professes to be a method of secret writing, being, indeed, no other than that in which the Druids concealed their mysteries. Its avowed qualities are simplicity and flexibility. These qualities are vouched to us on the faith of experiments made chiefly in Ireland, and especially of one in which two antiquaries had read an inscription to pretty nearly the same result, and afterwards found, on comparison of notes, that the one had read from left to right, the other from right to left. This phenomenon seems not

[1] Mr Stuart argues that the other figures are brooches or personal ornaments of some kind. After saying a good deal which, in the midst of the much wild and incoherent writing which crowds round this topic, sounds refreshingly to the purpose, he says, "The conclusion to which I arrive is, that the symbols—the comb, mirror, books, brooches, 'spectacles,' 'crescents,' and associated figures—were all objects of personal ornament or use, and that when they appear on our pillar stones, they are to be considered as symbols representing the dignity, office, or descent of individuals. Such memorials would probably be confined to a very limited class or race, and this would partly account for the apparent sameness of the representations. But it has to be added, that the grouping of the symbols is generally marked by some difference, however slight, and that out of all the monuments the same arrangement is repeated only on three of them."—II., Pref., 30.

to have created much surprise among the learned body who received the reports of the decipherers: that the inscriptions could be read either way was only a testimony to the power and simplicity of the Ogham character, which has also the faculty that, by shifting the places of the letters or ciphers, a long story may be made out of a few straight lines.[1] What those who profess to own the keys of such mysteries may yet bring out of them, it were rash to determine; but in the mean time the Ogham character, and its representations on the sculptured stones, can hardly be admitted within the pale of ascertained facts.

It must be mentioned that, very lately, this body of ancient remains has received a very curious addition, which as yet has however done nothing for the clearance of the mystery, whatever it may do. In several parts of Scotland there are caves already referred to which bear marks of ancient occupancy by religious recluses. These marks are fonts, crosses, altars, and the like. In examining some caves of this description in Fifeshire, figures which were the undoubted "symbols" of the sculptured stones were found engraved on the rocky walls of the caverns. It has yet to be seen what may be learned of these when they are in possession of the antiquarian world.[2]

The scantiness of all revelation from these stones as to either their date or the conditions under which they were adorned, will receive distinctness from an account

[1] 'An Account of an Ancient Inscription in Ogam Character on the Sepulchral Monument of an Irish Chief, discovered by Theophilus O'Flanagan,' Transactions of the Royal Irish Academy, i. 3.

[2] They will be found engraved in the second volume of Mr Stuart's work.

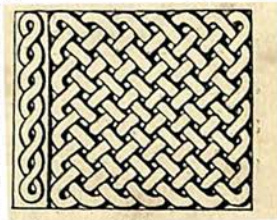
of the nearest approach that has been made to a ground of certainty on such questions. On the great body of decorated stones in the east country there are no inscriptions. One of a transition kind between the east and the west bears a runic inscription. It stands in the parish of Ruthwell, in Dumfriesshire, and is a magnificent richly-decorated cross. The runic lines running along its edge were an object of great interest to the Danish antiquaries, who discovered an old engraving of the monument, which had found its way to Copenhagen. The most satisfactory translation of the runes was accomplished by the great Saxon antiquary, John Kemble, who decided that they were Saxon, not Scandinavian runes, and that they commemorated the Passion on the Cross. Soon afterwards it fell to his lot to see a set of old Saxon homilies and hymns, and among these he convinced himself that he found the entire hymn, of which the inscription was a part. The result of this discovery was, that on critical principles the date of the cross was assigned to the eighth century.

A question remains, whether anything is revealed by the style of art proper to these stones, and its relation to monuments elsewhere. As to the æsthetic merits of the groups themselves, it cannot be said that they reach the rank of sculptural art, at least on the east coast. But besides the groups there is an affluence of mouldings and tracery, following geometrical rules, as all decorations of this sort should. The variety of these is infinite, and their richness and beauty very remarkable. In decoration the workers upon these stones were truly artists. The peculiar character of this interlaced work

has been pressed in to serve the mythological meaning attached to these stones, and they have been termed mystic knots, runic knots, and Druid knots. In another shape something may be done to account for them, but it is admitted to be through one of those analogies which it is not safe for the historian to indulge in too freely. All mere symmetrical decoration has a tendency to follow some object in nature, or some produce of the useful arts so essential as to be always in sight. Wherever, then, we find a special type prevailing in some great useful art, we may expect to see it spreading among the merely decorative arts. For instance, Gothic ecclesiastical architecture took a close hold of the public mind in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. Everything consequently imitated the prevailing forms. Whatever it might be—pictures, illumination, tapestry, wood-carving, seal-making, the decorating of silver-plate, and the binding of books—the prevalent features were Gothic pillars, arches, pinnacles, and mullions. On these stones, at least those in the eastern districts, with which we are now dealing, there is not a trace of this kind of work. They are as alien from the Gothic forms as from the classic and Egyptian. But may there not have been some forms of structural art anterior to the Gothic ecclesiastical buildings, from which they might have taken their type? We know that the early churches were built of wattles or wicker-work, and that it was long a favourite object of skill throughout the country to bring that sort of work to perfection. Now the reticulated devices which enrich the decoration of these stones are just those which wicker-work or basket-making would take if the worker were trying how variously and how symmetrically he could work his

patterns.[1] These sculptures are not the only relic of this kind of ornamentation. There exist some psalters and early religious manuscripts of the Irish Church,

[1] This specimen, from a stone in Dumbartonshire, may be compared with the decorations in the preceding cuts. The analogy stated above suggested itself to me some time ago, and was greatly strengthened by a tract called 'An Attempt to Explain the Origin and Meaning of the Early Interlaced Ornamentation found on the Ancient Sculptured Stones of Scotland, Ireland, and the Isle of Man,' by Gilbert J. French, of Bolton: 1858. The following is an exceedingly curious special application of the analogy: "There is a common arrangement in most of the Scottish and Irish crosses to which I desire to call attention; whether sculptured into true crosses, or merely engraved on the surface of the stone, they are divided into irregular compartments, each for the most part ornamented with a different device of interlaced work, or, in late examples, subjects in sculpture. These compartments are usually broad at the base, and gradually decrease in size towards the apex of the cross, as would be the case with a series of baskets piled upon each other, and then firmly bound together by continuous bands of twisted withes. A wheel or ring, connecting the horizontal with the perpendicular limbs, almost invariably accompanies the interlaced ornamentation on these early crosses. This ring I long supposed to represent a nimbus or glory, but remembering that that usual symbol of divinity is of Eastern origin, and that it is commonly met with on crosses where there is no representation of the figure of our Lord, I was induced to seek for some other meaning, and have now no hesitation in saying that its original purpose was not symbolical, or even merely ornamental, but that it was a necessary appliance in the construction of the earlier wicker-work crosses, reproduced on the stone crosses for the same reasons which induced the retention of the interlaced ornaments.



"It is obvious that the horizontal arms of a basket-work cross must require some extraneous aid to enable them to retain that position even for a short time. For this purpose the ring seemed to me to have been adopted; but I was quite unable to discover the manner in which it was applied, until on application to a practical basket-maker I was at once told that he could not construct a cross of willows without the ring, which he must make first, and then work the cross upon it. That such was its use is confirmed by the arrangement of some of the rude crosses in the Isle of Man. On the sculptured stone in the churchyard of Kirk-michael is a cross of interlaced work without any ring; but to compensate for its absence another contrivance has been adopted. The horizontal arms are sustained by a series of plaited twigs hung over the top of

older than the oldest specimens of the Norman-Gothic architecture. The plaited patterns of the sculptured stones may yet be seen among the treasures of the library of Trinity College, Dublin, in the illuminated manuscripts and decorated binding to be presently referred to. The building of wattles—the creel-house, as it was called—was common in the Highlands down at least to the beginning of the eighteenth century, and continued to exercise its influence on the eye, and consequently on the patterns in which the workman decorated the work of his hands; so on Highland powder-horns and the handles of dirks the runic knot, as it is termed, or the basket-work pattern, will be found down to the latest period when such articles were made for real use.

It will be inferred from what has been already said, that efforts to find analogies between these works and other schools of art have been more numerous than successful. So early as the fifteenth century, Hector Boece started one of the most copious of these fountains of analogy, by declaring that the figures on the stones corresponded with the Egyptian hieroglyphics —a theory which suited with his migration of the royal family of Scotland from Egypt. Efforts were made to discover in them the influence of the classic arts which might have found their way to Scotland under the

the upper limb, and interwoven with the arms. On the reverse of the same stone the cross has a ring composed of one thick and two slender stems, which last appear to pass through and fasten together the limbs and the ring by a curious and ingenious knot. Another example of a similar fastening may be observed on the fragment of stone, also at Kirkmichael, sculptured with a rude representation of a crucifixion. These knots are doubtless the origin of the richly-ornamented bosses, often covered with basket-work, so frequently met with in exactly the same positions on the Irish and Scottish crosses."

Roman occupancy. If we look at purely local conditions, however, we find that the district, which was long a Roman province, is precisely that in which the sculptured stones of the earlier type are rarest. With the great epochs of classic art—the Grecian, the Etruscan, and the Roman—the general style and character of the Scottish sculpture has no harmony, although in one instance there is an identity of form. A moulding which emphatically belongs to all the three classic schools—that which is called technically the single meander and the aligreek—is one of the simplest and purest of geometrical repetitions, and hence was acceptable to the pure taste of the classic workmen. Among the Scotch traceries it occurs once or twice, but the reason for its being among them is, that in so exhaustive a recourse to geometric forms this one would come up naturally in its order, and could not, indeed, be well avoided.

We have seen that this school of decoration has no similarity to Gothic work; as little does it ally itself to Saracenic or other Eastern forms. It was long taken for granted that it came from Scandinavia, but this origin is not confirmed by close examination. The old Scandinavian sculptures, of which the chief specimens are now easily accessible, deal with elements somewhat similar—supernatural animals, intertwined decoration, and the like. In their physiological character there is an identity—the same absence of repose, and intensity of life, action, and energy. It becomes clear, however, when they are compared with each other, that the same artistic spirit did not animate both, and that each is as individually separate from the other as the German school of painting from the Dutch. Perhaps each may have drawn its ideas from the same source.

The northern mythology dealt in serpents, in dragons, and in other monsters. The dragon was an established symbol of the northern nations, and their literature preserves precise accounts of the great sea-serpent. But as the German school and the Italian school dealt differently with the scriptural scenes to which both were dedicated, so would it seem that Scottish and Scandinavian art dealt differently with the objects common to both, if we are to suppose that they were so.[1] Like the propensity to find that all representations of things unknown found on ancient monuments must have a mystical or holy meaning, is the propensity to believe that all art found anywhere must have travelled from some other place. That it must have come "from the East" is the formula in use when one has no reason for knowing whence an art or a national custom may have been brought. For the prototype of these sculptures the world has been ransacked in all directions, but they are not to be found. It seems, then, that we must content ourselves in the mean time with the supposition that the style of art was invented

[1] In noticing, after the fashion of a passing stranger, the peculiarities of the sculpture and decorations in various parts of Europe, the Author was just once arrested by several groups of contorted monsters, which at once recalled recollections of the sculptured stones at home. They decorate the portal of the Kirche des Schotten-Klosters of Regensburg or Ratisbon. This was the head of a cluster of monastic establishments which belonged to the Scots of old—of Hibernia and Albania. Its privileges as a Scottish endowment lasted until 1848, when it was closed to the Scots as well as the rest of the world; and its rooms are empty of everything, except a few trifling household relics not worth removal, and reminiscences of the hospitality of the brethren to any wandering countrymen who found their way to the old Roman port on the Danube. To find the specialties of the Scots sculptured stones here, and here only, was hardly to be counted an exception to their nationality. The identity has been noticed by the author of the article on Scotch Religious Houses Abroad, in the Edinburgh Review for January 1864.

where the oldest specimens of it are found, and that it is unknown, unless in the directions in which it has spread from the site of the oldest specimens.

These sculptures of eastern Scotland, however, though they may be set down as the produce of native genius, are not entirely isolated. In the Isle of Man and the northern counties of England there are many sculptured stones partaking so much of the same character, that were their counterparts found in Scotland they would not surprise our antiquaries.[1] But a still wider connection opens towards the west. All through Argyleshire, especially its south-west portion, there is a rich store of sculptured stones, which diverge into specialties of their own, yet at the same time partake so far of the character of their eastern brethren, that there is no drawing a line of division between the two; and so they pass into Ireland, connecting the Scottish sculptures with the crosses of Monasterboice and other specimens, which are generally admitted to come within the category of art. With the character of the west of Scotland stones many tourists become acquainted by the annual regulation visit to Iona. There is an odd tradition of the district indeed, that all the others grouped round religious foundations of inferior name were carried off—or stolen, as the people usually put it—from Iona. The general tone of all these monuments is in a higher and freer art than that of their eastern neighbours. The decorations pass from their absolute geometrical formulas, and, retaining the adjustments of the geometrical law, as all symmetrical

[1] In the New Series of the Archæologia Cambrensis (ii. 311) there is an account of a fragment of a sculptured stone, found at Caerlon-on-Lusk, in Wales, which has one of the willow-plait patterns, and other characteristics of the east of Scotland stones.

decoration must, they expand with a sort of floral freedom, dealing in the arrangements of branches, leaves, flowers, and clusters. Many of them, as works of art, are extremely beautiful. None of them are so ancient as their eastern brethren; and whether or not it be from a Celtic distaste of change, the oldest types are imitated down to days comparatively modern, even to the early part of the eighteenth century. Altogether, this school of art, with at the one extremity the rudest sculptures on the stones in north-eastern Scotland, and at the other the splendid crosses of Ireland, is worthy of more study, even as part of the history of art, than it has hitherto received.[1]

From the point we have now reached, we can trace this school of art farther onwards, and into a higher development. Specimens of it are to be seen in the bindings of ancient Irish psalters, and other books held

[1] For the study of the stones of the eastern district, besides and in aid of local inspection, the exhaustive work prepared by Mr Stuart for the Spalding Club will supersede everything else in the shape of art and literature. As this goes to press, a tempting glimpse has been obtained of the second part—not yet issued—of Mr Stuart's great work. He there gives some specimens of the western stones—enough to excite some emulation on the richer side of Scotland to imitate what has been done in the north-east.

When this is done, and the whole result is examined, along with some other specimens of art to be presently noticed, it will be found that there existed a widespread school of decorative art, so far claiming a Scottish origin that as yet the most ancient specimens of the peculiar style of workmanship are found in Scotland. Mr Stuart notices the elements common to the sculptured stones of Scotland and the decorated crosses of Ireland, which make it difficult, if not impracticable, to draw a distinct dividing line between them. He points to some very interesting variations of the one from the other, which, instead of separating them by a dividing line, show them to have the variations which belong to members of the same family.

"If the knowledge of this intricate style of ornament was introduced into Pictland from Ireland, the fact remains, that such knowledge was

sacred. The binding was, in fact, the shrine in which the book, as a holy relic, was enclosed; and it behoved such a receptacle to be decorated according to the highest skill of the age. In the illumination of the manuscripts themselves there was opportunity for bringing in a new element of art in the application of colour, and these illuminations by Irish scribes are so remarkable as to have received much attention from foreign critics of art. Dr Waagen was struck with the beauty and variety of their geometric patterns, and the precision and firmness with which each design was carried to its ultimate conclusions. He observed the specialty already hinted at, that the artists, so wonderful in geometric design, yet had little hold upon art proper—had no command over perspective anatomy, the distribution of light and shade, or the transcript of natural colours. All their efforts to produce the human

used in so independent a fashion that we must allow to it the merit of a national art. For not only did it make use of the sculptures which it found on the earlier rude pillars, embellishing and working them up in the general design of the crosses, but it seems plain that the artists in Scotland preceded those in Ireland in the art of sculpturing the elaborate devices in question on stone.

"This will be granted if we bear in mind the prevailing character of the Scotch crosses, as compared with that of such Irish crosses as those at Monasterboice, Kells, and Clonmacnois. In Pictland the idea of the pillar stone is still retained. The cross is merely sculptured on the face of a pillar or erect slab, having its limbs filled up with the ornament in question on a flat surface. Occasionally a circle is cut on the face of the slab at the intersection of the limbs. A comparison will show that this is the Irish cross in germ, and that the latter is in a greatly more developed stage than the Scotch examples. In Ireland the stone is cut into the figure of a cross, with sculpture on its faces and edges, and the circle around the arms is cut free; so that we may regard a Scotch cross as an artist's draft on stone of the plan of an Irish one, and as first attempts at that form which the Irish cross subsequently attained. 'The subjects of the Irish sculptures are generally biblical, and the date of the crosses is probably two centuries later than those of Pictland."—Preface, ii. 20.

figure or other objects were what is called "out of drawing" to an extent which helped to prove that their school of art was peculiar to themselves, and had not received aid from Continental models; and he concluded that "such a high cultivation of the purely technical part, at so early a period, with the total absence of all knowledge of the figurative part, which forms the true and the higher element of art, is certainly peculiar and remarkable."[1]

There is a more remarkable instance, in which the specialties of this school of art caught the attention of a foreign critic. Of all the Continental monasteries with which the Irish churchmen were connected, the most illustrious in itself, and the most largely associated with these wanderers, was St Gall. Among the remarkable manuscripts preserved there, are very ancient Irish books—as old, it is said, as the seventh century. Some of them are richly illuminated, and we have the benefit of a critical examination of their decorations by Dr Ferdinand Keller. He notices the great preponderance of technical geometric decoration over high art, and especially observes that the human figure is brought in less to represent life than to fit into and complete a symmetrical design. He sets to work, in the analytic and classifying spirit of his country, to describe the specialties of the school of art before him; and whether or not we must adopt his conclusions about its origin, there is no denying the precision of his analysis.[2] More satisfactory than his analysis,

1 Quoted by Dr Reeves in article on Early Irish Caligraphy, in the Ulster Journal of Archæology, July 1860.

2 "The principles of Irish ornamentation consist—

"1. In a single band, or a number of bands interlaced diagonally and symmetrically, so as to form by their crossings a great variety of different

however, are some fac-similes of these decorated books, furnished by the author and repeated by the translator. In these the eye accustomed to the sculptured stones

patterns. In the language of ordinary life, such an ornament is called with us 'zweifelstricke' (literally, doubtful bands).

"2. In one or two extremely fine spiral lines, which wind round each other and meet in the centre, while their ends run off again and form new spirals.

"3. In various representations of animals resembling birds, lizards, serpents, and dogs, which are often stretched out lengthwise in a disagreeable manner, and interlaced with each other, while their tails and tongues are drawn out into bands.

"4. In a row of broken diagonal strokes, which form different systems of lattice-work, resembling some kinds of Chinese ornaments.

"5. In panelling, generally composed of triangular compartments or other geometrical figures, which represent a kind of draught-board, or a mosaic of variegated stones.

"All these ornaments are usually distributed in well-defined compartments. In the initial letters, especially the larger ones, the genius of Irish ornamental design is found in full development, and brought to a degree of beauty and precision of execution of which it is almost impossible to form an idea without having seen it. Here are displayed, in the greatest profusion and variety, the spirals, the complicated serpentine windings, and the panelling; in short, the designer has expended his whole skill and knowledge in producing these gigantic initials, whose height is often from 10 to 15 French inches. The most difficult task in these patterns is, without doubt, the spiral lines. These are real masterpieces, which furnish a splendid proof of the extraordinary firmness of hand possessed by the artist.

"Every one of the larger initial letters is a rich and systematically planned composition, the closer examination of which becomes a kind of study in itself, if we would wish to follow the ideas of the designer, and account for the impression he aimed at producing on the observer.

"In all these ornaments there breathes a peculiar spirit, which is foreign to the people of the West: there is in them a something mysterious, which imparts to the eye a certain feeling of uneasiness and suspense. This is especially the case with those frightful-looking monstrous figures of animals, whose limbs twist and twine themselves into a labyrinth of ornaments, where one can hardly resist the natural impulse to search for the other parts of their bodies, often nearly concealed, or passing into different strange creatures.

"The variety of these forms of ornament, with their luxuriant development, often extravagant, but sometimes uncommonly delicate and lovely, could not possibly have been the creation of a fancy which derived its nourishment and its stimulus from natural objects so devoid of colour and form as present themselves in the north of Ireland, and in the rocky

of Scotland finds itself at once at home. This special school of decoration is as certainly identified in these as in any specimens of Egyptian or Etruscan art. Indeed, the most complex and beautiful specimen furnished by the German artist, is but a variation on the specimen to which the same terms might be applied in the celebrated collection of transcripts of the sculptured stones of Scotland. There is one, then, though as yet but one, comprehensive conclusion to which the scrutiny recently applied to these monuments has brought us—that they show to us the development of a separate and remarkable school of art.

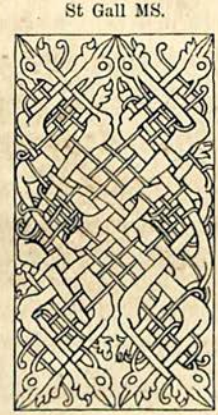
islands of the west of Scotland. They must have originated in the East, or at least have their prototypes there. That the Irish system of ornamentation does naturally find an analogy in Eastern countries is proved by the illustrations published by C. Knight, in a small work on Egypt. We there find the serpentine bands of the Irish ornaments appearing already in the oldest Egyptian and Ethiopian manuscripts, and with a similarity of colour and combination truly astonishing."

The last supposition must go for what it is worth—the description and the comparisons are, however, rendered obvious by the fac-similes given in the Ulster Journal. They may be compared with the stones at Shandwick, at Nigg in Ross-shire, at St Andrews, and at Thornhill in Dumfriesshire, forming Nos. 26, 28, 52, 54, and 121 in Mr Stuart's Collection. The analogy may indeed be in some measure tested through the imperfect medium of a woodcut.

Stone at Nigg (Ross-shire).



From the St Gall MS.



CHAPTER V.

The Early Races.

THE ROMANISED INHABITANTS—THEIR DEGENERACY—THEIR DISAPPEARANCE FROM HISTORY—AURELIANUS AMBROSIUS—THE ROMANCES OF KING ARTHUR AND HIS KNIGHTS—THEIR CONNECTION WITH SCOTLAND—INCOMPATIBILITY OF THEIR CHIVALROUS SPIRIT WITH THE CONDITIONS OF THE PERIOD—THE OSSIANIC LITERATURE—BRITONS OF STRATHCLYDE—THE PICTS—THE GREAT PICTISH QUESTION—ETYMOLOGICAL WAR—SPECIMENS OF THE VICTORIES ON EITHER SIDE—WHAT THEY HAVE GAINED—WHAT IS TAUGHT BY ANCIENT REMAINS—WHAT WE GATHER FROM CLASSIC AUTHORS—WEAKNESS OF THEIR CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE SOLUTION—THE PAINTED RACES—EARLY INFLUENCE OF TEUTONIC RACES—THE SCOTS—ORIGINALLY A NAME FOR NATIVES OF IRELAND—CAME OVER IN COLONIES—NECESSITY FOR REMEMBERING THE EARLY MEANING OF THE WORD, AND THE TIME WHEN IT WAS TRANSFERRED TO SCOTLAND—THEIR HIGHER CIVILISATION AND INFLUENCE OVER OTHER RACES.

LET us now endeavour to trace as closely as the rather chaotic nature of our materials may permit, the origin and condition of the several populations inhabiting Scotland about the time when the Roman provinces in Britain ceased to be governed from the imperial centre. We must here count Valentia, the Roman province between the walls, as bearing a portion in the fate of the English provinces.

What has come down to us of the doings of the

Romanised Britons, when left to their own resources, vibrates between two historical phases: the one consistent, but scantily supported by trustworthy authority; the other palpably steeped in fable.

According to the former, there arose a heroic prince on the Roman model, Aurelianus Ambrosius, who collected and centralised the scattered forces of the various provinces. He had before him two great achievements. The first was to subdue the tyrant Vortigern. By some this man is treated as the usurper of the British crown; others represent him as a monarch who betrayed his trust by calling in the assistance of two northern chiefs, called Hengest and Horsa, and conniving with them in obtaining that position in the country which became so fatal to the independence of the British people. When Ambrosius had punished Vortigern, he had next to deal with the ferocious strangers. Here the national hero gains victory after victory, reversing in detail what we know to have been the general tenor of a struggle which ended in the ascendancy of the Saxon. To meet the palpable fact that in spite of these victories the eastern territories became full of Saxons, Ambrosius figures as a magnanimous prince, who endowed his fallen foes with suitable territory, and in pursuance of this spirit he bestowed a portion of Scotland on Octa, the son of Hengest.

The other version of the destiny of the Romanised Britons throws us at once into the glowing romance of King Arthur and his Knights of the Round Table. Here all is fairyland, in which the most sagacious critics have been unable to glean a particle of narrative which can be set apart as well-authenticated fact.

The whole cast of the Arthurian story, indeed, independently of its supernatural machinery, confutes itself by its antagonism to the great conditions of contemporary history. It is not the narrative of the decay and gradual extinction of Roman institutions. There is a sudden revolution, in which these are at once expunged as the tokens of a long thraldom, and the original British institutions, unforgotten by centuries of disuse, are triumphantly restored. Druidism comes in with them, but, to obviate all awkward inconsistency with the coexistence of Christianity, it takes the new shape of the Bardic system, and the British Druids are represented by the Welsh bards. But the revolution was less remarkable for the restoration of such elements of long-passed ages, than for its anticipation of the social system which was to prevail in Europe centuries afterwards. Everything about Arthur and his court, whether it profess to be actual history or avow itself to be romance, is made up of that age of chivalry which did not dawn on the rest of Europe for some centuries later. The whole tone of the narratives belongs to the social conditions in which lived Saint Louis, Richard of the Lion-Heart, and Godfrey of Bouillon. The properties, to use a stage expression, are Gothic castles, with their moats and flanking-works, burnished coats of mail and heraldic ensigns; and all these are made to abound at a period when there was not in Britain a castle or a coat of mail, and heraldry had not yet been dreamed of. The Mabinogion, as well as the heavier Armoric romances, deals with a state of society not more unlike anything in the Britain of the fifth century than it is unlike to social life in Finland or Otaheite at

present. And the same spirit of chivalry and romance gives the tone to those noble poems which interpret the spirit of the Arthurian romances to the present generation.

With that chronicle of the time which professes to be history and not romance is mixed up the narrative of the achievements of the prophet Ambrose Merlin. When Vortigern could not build his tower by reason of the sinking of the foundation, and his magicians could not solve the difficulty, he looked out for a man who did not owe his birth to a discoverable human father, as the proper person to be consulted in such an emergency, and thus obtained the services of the invaluable Merlin. The prophet told the builders to dig, and they would find a subterraneous lake; and so it came to pass. He bade them dig farther, and they would come to two stones, each of which when broken would let loose an imprisoned dragon, the one white and the other red; and so also it came to pass. When the two dragons saw each other face to face, they fell a-fighting, and rehearsed the coming drama of war that was to desolate the land; for the white dragon represented the Saxons, and the red dragon the British. While the king sat looking upon the contest, Merlin, inspired, poured forth his prophecies in one of the wildest and most picturesque succession of visions that human genius ever invented. When a suitable monument was wanted to commemorate the heroes who had died in the contest with the Saxons, Merlin suggested that the great upright stones called the "The Giants' Dance," standing on the Curragh of Kildare, in Ireland, should be brought over to serve that purpose. All efforts to remove these massive memorials were totally

ineffective, till Merlin applied to them his supernatural engineering skill; then they were brought over to England, and set up on Salisbury Plain, where they became known by the name of Stonehenge, and may be seen to this day. All this and much more of the same kind is felt to be just as credible as those portions of the Arthurian histories which do not profess to touch the supernatural.

If any reality could be extracted from them, Scotland would have its full share, since much of the narrative comes northward of the present border. Berwick was the *joyeuse garde* of Sir Lancelot, and Aneurin describes a bloody battle round Edinburgh Castle. Local tradition and the names of places have given what support such agencies can to the Scottish claims on the Arthurian history. So the curious Roman edifice on the bank of the Carron was called Arthur's Oon or Oven;[1] and we have Arthur's Seat, Ben-Arthur, Arthurlee, and the like. The sculptured stones in the churchyard of Meigle have come down as a monument to the memory and crimes of his faithless wife.[2]

The great romance of Sir Tristrem has been held by Scott and others to be the work of the Scottish Merlin, Thomas of Ercildoun; and another romance of the Round Table, Sir Lancelot of the Lake, is the work of a Scotsman. These, however, could hardly be held to prove any nationality in the original history, since this kind of romance became general over Europe. There is no reason to believe that it is of ancient origin, or older than the age of that chivalry that pervades it. Something in a contact with the Normans and their chivalry

[1] See above, p. 51.

[2] See above, p. 149.

seems to have stirred the Celtic blood, and conjured from it imaginative historical pictures of surpassing brilliancy. It is certain that while the Welsh people seem to have been steeped in lethargy from the Saxon contest downwards, immediately on their coming in contact with the Normans their wonderful romance literature burst forth. It influenced the mind of all Christendom; and every legend or poem commemorative of the age of chivalry, be it in the language of the Norwegian, the German, the French, or the Italian, took its shape and its tone from the stories of King Arthur and his knights. Even if the nominal heroes were Alexander the Great or Charlemagne or Roland, the romance is no less an example of the Welsh school.

Another literature, no less eminent, but totally different in character, professes to deal with Scotland near and after the end of the Roman sojourn. It was the object of one of the most memorable critical contests narrated in the history of literature. There was a time, perhaps within the memory of persons yet living, when a man considered the birthplace and the temper of those who sat at meat with him ere he would tell his mind on the question of "the authenticity of Ossian's Poems." This has passed away among buried contests, and the nature of the services of James Macpherson are pretty fairly estimated by the public. The Arthurian romances, though false in the persons and the period of their heroes, are true to the spirit of their own age, and are the simple echo of its chivalry. The Ossianic literature combines various elements. The Arthur of these epics was Fian, son of Comhal, or Finn M'Coull, as he is more frequently termed,—the hero-king and the organiser of the great Irish armed force.

The somewhat dreary literature in which his own and his followers' deeds are recorded was thus the framework of the whole. But to the finishing and decoration the great literary artist brought a knowledge of the Arthurian romances and the Norse Sagas, with a study of Homeric literature so deep that he ventured on a translation of the Iliad. Above all, he brought to his work the true power of a great poet, and, as it happened, of a poet who drew his admiration from the scenes in which his heroes were to act,—stormy seas, precipices, cataracts, huge forests and mountains, all frequented by misty clouds or swept by hollow winds.

Any attempt to look into the real history of the Romanised Britons, immediately after the withdrawal of the imperial protection, makes a meagre and dreary contrast with this glowing literature. Both their civilisation and their Christianity appear to have been very feeble, and unfitted to bear the roughing of their altered condition. It is uncertain whether the Saxons who broke in upon the places where Roman institutions flourished retained any portion of them. It is pretty certain, however, that the British themselves soon ceased to possess any. As to their Christianity, the antiquity of the Christian church in any community is ever well proved by a considerable authentic list of early saints; that is to say, a list of persons as to whom, although the sanctity may be an after-thought, the fact that they existed and were teachers of the Christian faith is well authenticated. We shall see that the Scots of Ireland, and the colony they sent over to Scotland, swarmed at an early period with these saints. A little later many were at work among

the Saxons and the Lowland Scots. The Welsh, too, have their list, and a very heavy one it is; but its elements disappear almost utterly on a close examination.[1]

Gildas, the author of some historical fragments, is claimed as an early writer of the British territory deserted by the Romans; but the Welsh antiquaries have hardly strengthened the claim by identifying him with Aneurin, their mighty bard, whose name, by the way, belongs to Scotland, since the Welsh traditions place his birth and the abode of his family between the walls, though he afterwards took refuge in Wales. Of Gildas, however, it is said by Mr Stevens, the latest and most learned editor of his fragments, that "we are unable to speak with certainty as to his parentage, his country, or even his name, the period when he lived, or the works of which he was the author." If we take the internal testimony of what he says of the condition of the British people and their Church as evidence that he lived and wrote among them in the sixth century, its tenor is certainly in unison with other testimony, but is not such as a patriotic people would eagerly claim as their own. He begins by lamenting to the world

[1] In Cressy's Church History the list proceeds after this fashion:—Joseph of Arimathea, apostle of the Britons, and founder of the church at Glastonbury. 2. Mansuetus, a Caledonian Briton, disciple of St Peter at Rome, and afterwards Bishop of Toul, in Lorraine. 3. Aristobulus, a disciple of St Peter or St Paul, sent as an apostle to the Britons, and was the first Bishop of Britain, &c. If but a small proportion of the catalogue so beginning could be made good, it would form a very distinguished hagiological connection; but it all falls to pieces at the touch of inquiry. Mr Rice Rees's Essay on the Welsh Saints is a book one cannot read without some feeling of sympathetic compassion for the author. He appears to have taken to his task in a patriotic spirit, and a design to build up a solid memorial; but he was honest withal, and he lets us see how the ground slips from beneath his feet as he works.

that he has no mighty deeds of valour to record, but has only, to his own deep grief and humiliation, to relate the history of a degenerate and slothful race. He then goes on to describe, after the fashion of the scriptural prophets, the degeneracy of the times, and the decay of vital Christianity in the people among whom his lot is cast. Bede, in what little he tells us of the early British Church, rates it for its degeneracy, and especially for the encouragement given by it to the Pelagian heresy. If we set aside the affluent list of saints and bishops in the Welsh traditions, and look solely to what Bede and others, professing to give the history of the period, tell us, we shall find only two names famous for their connection with Christianity in Britain after the departure of the Romans. These are, St Lupus and St Germain, illustrious for having put to flight a Pictish army by the frightful yells with which they uttered their halleluiahs. But even these peculiarly-gifted saints were not Britons; on the contrary, we are told that they were sent over by a general council of the Gallican Church for the purpose of giving battle to the Pelagianism that was corrupting British Christianity.

It is strange that, for all the learning and labour devoted to it, we should know so little as we do of the great revolution which planted the Saxon race in Britain. About the details of the displacement of the original population, and the establishment of the strangers, we know hardly anything. When the political storm, which so thickens the historical atmosphere, clears away, we then find the British people residing in those western parts of the island, from Cornwall to the Clyde, which stretch out beyond the fourth degree

of west longitude from Greenwich. Their portion is thus, as the eye will at once catch on a map, the most mountainous, rocky, and generally barren portion of the island. The Saxons, as the northern invaders were called, were in possession of nearly all that is now called England, in distinction from Wales, and of Berwickshire and the three Lothians in Scotland.

The early annalists, feeling bound to account for the details of this revolution, did so by a short process, which made the British population resolve to betake themselves to the fastnesses of the western mountains, since they could no longer cope with the hordes of ferocious northern depredators poured in upon them. The fuller knowledge we now have of the physical necessities that govern mankind make us doubt any such migration, unless it be supported by strong evidence—by evidence not only to the general fact, but to the way in which it was accomplished. Supposing the phenomenon of the whole population of England proper migrating into Wales, we have no reason to suppose that they would have had a better chance of finding food and the other means of living there in the fifth or sixth century than they would in the present. We know of other instances of great migrations in the early periods of European history—as when the northern Germans moved away from the despotic rule of Charlemagne, and a crowd of Scandinavians migrated to Iceland, the Orkneys, or anywhere, to be free from the tyranny of Harold Harfager. But these exiles became the terror of every neighbouring nation. They took forcible possession of the places of refuge they selected, and covered the neighbouring seas with pirate ships, thus expressively proving to the world the

economic principle that there must be a proportion between population and the means of subsistence. They did not, like the British of the old received histories, retire collectively into a corner of the territory which they had previously filled.

The world has, in later times, had many signal opportunities of seeing how the stronger races displace the weaker—how they do so by injustice and cruelty, when left to irresponsible will; but how, at the same time, the process goes on by a sort of physiological law, even when powerful machinery is established for putting down all injustice and violence by the dominant race. At the fate of the greater portion of the Britons of the Roman provinces we can only guess, on the data of such knowledge. The Saxons, we know, had multitudes of slaves, and as they would follow the ordinary old rules of conquest, we may suppose that their earliest stock of this commodity was acquired in the conquests by which they gained their lands. In this shape and in others a great proportion of the British people seem to have become absorbed into the Saxon.

Cornwall was subsequently occupied by the strangers, and the place of the Britons to the south of present Scotland became limited to what was afterwards known as the Principality of Wales. The narrow part of North England, Lancashire and Yorkshire, being occupied by the Saxons, there was thus a gap between the southern Britons and those of Scotland. These became a little independent state, known as Strathclyde, having a sort of capital and natural fortress at Dumbarton. This country is now known as the shires of Ayr, Renfrew, Lanark, Stirling, and Dumbarton. It had its own

small portion in the events of the time through which it existed in independence, and became at last, as we shall see, absorbed in the aggregation that made the kingdom of Scotland. Such was one of the early elements of this aggregation. Another and much greater was the kingdom of the Picts, which included at least the whole of eastern Scotland from the Firth of Forth northwards, and certainly a considerable portion of the North Highlands. It marched to the westward with the territory of the Dalriads or the Scots of Ireland, which will be discussed in its own place.

We have seen that at an early period these Picts were spoken of by Roman writers as among the assailants of the imperial provinces of Britain. A mighty and exciting question has long raged among archæologists and etymologists—to which of the great European tongues and races did they belong? No one maintains that they were a Slavonic people, and the debate has lain between Celtic on the one hand and Teutonic or German on the other. The mention of these people by contemporary Greek or Roman writers is of the most fugitive and tantalising character, and the problem of who and what they were had hence to be worked out by a process almost entirely limited to etymology. In the noisy altercation into which the inquiry heated itself, the only early passage which seemed to bear the testimony of a contemporary observer was overwhelmed. This passage is in Tacitus. He came to the conclusion that the large limbs and the red hair of the Caledonians attested a German origin, and he specifically noticed the contrast which these peculiarities afforded to the appearance of the inhabitants of the south, or of England. Among these he thought the Silures or inhabitants of

the southern part of the west of England had come over from Spain. They inhabited the nearest part of Britain to that country, and the facility of access, with the dark tawny complexion and curled hair of the Silures, suggested the theory. The inhabitants of the south seaboard of England had, he thought it likely, come over from the opposite coast of Gaul. The two sets of people resembled each other; they had common religious rites and belief, and the language of the two differed but slightly.[1] Among the many disputable points on which the combatants in this field of wordy strife have fought to the last, one thing connected with what Tacitus says seems beyond doubt—that the word Picti, afterwards used, included his inhabitants of Caledonia. The Scots of Ireland, it has to be observed, had not then come over. Had Tacitus examined the ground some three centuries afterwards, he would have found in the west of Scotland, as in the south-west of England, a dusky lithe people, whom he could put in contrast with the red-haired and large-limbed Caledonians.

Meagre as it is, this announcement of opinion by so

1 "Habitus corporum varii; atque ex eo argumenta: namque rutilæ Caledoniam habitantium comæ, magni artus, Germanicam originem adseverant. Silurum colorati vultus, et torti plerumque crines, et posita contrà Hispania, Iberos veteres trajecisse, easque sedes occupasse fidem faciunt: proximi Gallis, et similes sunt: seu durante originis vi; seu procurrentibus in diversa terris, positio cœli corporibus habitum dedit: in universum tamen æstimanti, Gallos vicinum solum occupasse, credibile est. Eorum sacra deprehendas, superstitionum persuasione; sermo haud multum diversus," &c.—Agricola, xi. There may be a doubt which of its several meanings *coloratus* should have, but the intention seems to have been to denote darkness of complexion. Seneca, speaking of the civilising influence of frequenting the schools of the philosophers, says, "Qui in solem venit, licet non in hoc venerit colorabitur; qui in unguentaria taberna resederunt, et paulo diutius commorati sunt, odorem secum loci ferunt."—Ep. 108. Virgil, speaking of the Nile coming from the black Ethiopians, has "Coloratis ab Indis."—Georgic., iv. 293.

sagacious a man is valuable in the dearth of contemporary information about the early inhabitants of Britain. It is not casually made for mere antithesis, but with deliberative earnestness; and the author expressly stops and calls the attention of his reader to the importance of the physical difference he has marked, intending, as he says, to draw conclusions from it. What Tacitus means us to infer is, that the inhabitants of the south were Celts from Gaul and Spain, while the Caledonians of the north were of German or Teutonic stock. In this, however, Tacitus may be mistaken, and the discussion of the matter on other grounds of evidence created the memorable controversy of the Pictish question. The following were the rather scanty materials at the command of the combatants.

The earliest known allusion to the Picti is in an eulogium or triumphal address delivered in the year 296, in presence of Constantius Chlorus, afterwards Emperor, by Eumenius, Professor of Rhetoric in Autun. The occasion was the victory over Allectus, who had set up as Emperor in Britain. The orator, however, speaks of these Picti as a people of some standing, since, going back to Julius Cæsar's day, he says the British had then no more formidable enemy to contend with than the Picts and the Scots, half-naked savages. From this time onwards the term continued to be freely used. When we pass from the later imperial authorities to the earliest British chroniclers, they speak of the Picts and their Pictland as an established state under a monarch. Bede, writing in the early part of the eighth century, tells us that, besides the Latin, the Gospel was proclaimed in four native languages — namely, the English, the Scots or Irish, the British, and

the Pictish. If this last was of Teutonic origin, then there were spoken two Teutonic and two Celtic tongues—counting the British as a Celtic dialect; and the distribution was, as it is continued to the present day, in Welsh or British, Gaelic, English, and Lowland Scotch. On the other hand, if the Picts spoke a Celtic language, then there were three Celtic to one Teutonic. Henry of Huntingdon, who wrote early in the twelfth century, repeats the statement of Bede, but explains that the Picts existed no longer; they appeared to have been extinguished, and their language to have been so utterly annihilated, that the finding it spoken of in ancient writings seemed to him like a fable. It has been shown, however, by the writers with whose theories such a statement was not in harmony, that it was made at random, since, as we shall see afterwards, certain combatants called Picts fought at the great Battle of the Standard, as late as Henry of Huntingdon's time. As exemplifying the difference between the language of the Picts of Scotland and the Saxons of England, just one little example has come down to us. Bede tells us of the northern Roman wall, that its western termination was at a place which, in the Pictish language, was called *Peanfahel*, and in the Saxon or English language *Peneltun*. It would be difficult to find, except among the momentous texts in the Bible, a passage so keenly and discursively commented on as the few words in which Bede, unconsciously telling a trifle by the way, records this distinction; but I cannot admit that the commentators have made anything out of it leading to a historical conclusion.[1] There have been

[1] That the reader may have an opportunity of judging on this for himself, I give the commentary of Joseph Ritson, who is among the latest

one or two other words traced to a Pictish source, with no more efficient conclusion.[1]

There is another and a rather more significant incidental reference to the language of the Picts in the early authorities. On two occasions St Columba is spoken of by his biographer Adamnan as communicating the message of salvation to inhabitants of Pictland through an interpreter.[2] This bears hard on a theory which would have otherwise seemed plausible, that the Picts were an earlier arrival of the same Celtic family which migrated from Ireland to Argyleshire in the fourth century, and that although the two differed slightly in speech, they had so much in common that they afterwards amalgamated, and became the common stock of the Scots Highlanders.

writers who have treated at large on the passage, and who had the benefit of many previous criticisms :—

"The Roman wall, he says (meaning that of Antoninus), began at almost two miles' distance from the monastery of *Æbercurnig*, now Abercorn, on the west, at a place which, in the Pictish language (*sermone Pictorum*), was called *Peanfahel*, but in the English or Saxon language, *Peneltun*. Now this identical place Nennius, a Briton, calls *Pengaaul* (the wall, which he erroneously confounds with that of Severus, being, he says, in the British tongue called *Gual*), which town was called in Scottish *Cenail*, but in English *Peneltun*. It is therefore evident that the word *pean* in Pictish, as *pen* in British and *cean* in Scottish or Irish signified *head*, and *fahel* in the first of those languages, as *gaaul* in the second (both indeed borrowing corruptly from the Latin *vallum*), a *wall*, meaning, like *Cenail*, the head of the wall ; and consequently that there was some analogy between the British language and that of the Picts, each being a branch from the Celtic stem ; unless, indeed, it may be contended that the Picts, like the Saxons, had merely adopted the British name of the place in question, without troubling themselves to express its meaning in their proper tongue."—Ritson, Annals of the Caledonians, Picts, and Scots, i. 121-3.

[1] See in Reeves's St Columba the conclusions from Cartoit, "a pin in the Pictish tongue," and Scollofthes, discovered by Robertson to be applied among the Picts to a humble grade of ecclesiastical officers.

[2] Vita, i. 32, ii. 32.

It was conjectured in this as it was in many other instances, that Picti was not the name given to the people by the Romans, but was the name given to them by themselves and their neighbours, merely changed to make it inflect a Latin noun. If the original word could be found, its etymology might help to discover the race of its owners. To this end the Picts were identified not only with the Piks, the Peks, the Pechts, the Pights, Pyhtas, Pekiti, the Peochtan, and others which gave some affinity in sound, but strayed so far away as to be identified with Petæ, Petar, Picardes, Paikiar, Peukini, Vihtar, Pygars, Pakhar, Baggar, and Baggeboar.[1] So wide a range of etymological analogy gave rise to many theories which it would be profitless to follow out. I shall just venture to offer one specimen of them, as it is about the boldest, the most ingenious, and the most complete.

Pinkerton, probably in the course of the general survey which he required to make when compiling his System of Geography, found that the Delta of the mouth of the Danube included an island called Peuké. From that moment he seems to have formed the determination to prove that here, on the shore of the Black Sea, was the cradle of the Picts, and consequently of his fellow-countrymen of Lowland Scotland. He finds Pomponius Mela speaking of Peuké as a large and important island. Apollonius Rhodius, Zozimus, Ammianus Marcellinus, Jornandes, all say something about Peuké. Still greater authorities come in—Herodotus, Tacitus, Ovid in his Tristia, Strabo, and Ptolemy; if they do not specifically say anything to the point about Peuké or the Peukini, yet they say some-

[1] See Ritson's Annals, i. 81, 96-7.

thing that can be brought to bear on the spot, and so give their great names to swell the fame of Peuké. Like the Greeks, the Peukini were Scythians or Goths. From their small island-home they soon spread over a vast space, for they are found to be identical with the Basternæ, who formed one-fifth of the whole Gothic race—the largest in the world; and they are, after a certain time, found stretching across Europe to the Baltic. We find that the Mount Peuké mentioned by old geographers must have been within sixty miles of that sea.[1]

He finds something in Strabo to justify the belief that the Basternæ peopled Scandinavia, and "it can hardly be supposed that the Peukini, whose name is put by Tacitus as synonymous with Basternæ, and whom we have traced up to the very shore opposite to Scandinavia, should have sent no colonies into it. On the contrary, we have every reason to believe that they were the first Scythians who passed into it, and, moving on in constant progress, left room for their brethren the Sitones to follow.[2] He finds no direct authority for

[1] "Ptolemy places the Peukini on the north of the Basternæ: so that of all the Basternæ they were nearest to the Baltic. And that the Peukini actually reached to the Baltic we know from Tacitus, who in the end of his Germania ranges them with the Venedi and Fenni, whom Ptolemy places near the Vistula, upon the Baltic. Tacitus also puts the *Venedi* between the Peukini and *Fenni*, so that the Peukini must have been on the shore of the Baltic, on the east side of the mouth of the Vistula, or in present Prussia; from which they extended south to their Basternic brethren in the western part of present Hungary, a tract about 400 miles long and from 100 to 150 broad. With so large possessions it is no wonder that Pliny should put the Peukini as a fifth part of the Germans, and that their name should be used as synonymous with the Basternæ."—Dissertation on the Origin and Progress of the Scythians or Goths, pp. 160, 161.

[2] Dissert., 175. There is something of literary bullying in this kind of piling-up of far-off references. It overawes the unlearned, and, if done with

the Peukini having ever been in Scandinavia, but this only strengthens his position. They were on the move from the Black Sea northward. They approached the Baltic. They were followed by the lazy Sitones. These Sitones are found occupying Scandinavia. The Peukini must therefore have been there before them;

tolerable skill, frightens the indolent learned into acquiescence for peace' sake and the saving of trouble. In this department of study—perhaps also in others—the writer who piles up references in his notes beyond what is necessary to enable him to test the accuracy of the text, is to be rather distrusted. If any writer chooses indolently to take his knowledge "from the highest recent authorities," instead of going to the original sources and judging of their import, he had better avoid those "authorities" which arrogate a very profuse amount of learning.

If Pinkerton expected to escape close criticism by the multiplicity and repulsive character of his authorities, he was mistaken. He might fairly calculate on the world at large letting him alone, and giving him credit for as much accuracy and learning as he professed; but in such a question as the origin of the Picts he had to contend with opponents who would follow his steps with exhaustless patience, and give no quarter when they found him tripping. Unfortunately for the credit of this kind of learning, his slips were numerous, and gave great opportunity for the enemy to exult. The last sentence in this quotation is one of them. Pliny—an author of little use as an authority for close facts—does not call the people referred to "a fifth part of the Germans;" but, separating the German nation into five, makes these in order, the fifth, and last, "Germanorum genera v. . . . quinta pars Peucini, Basternæ, supra dictis contermini."—Plin., Hist. Nat., iv. 14. This, if there were not too many instances of the same sort, all tending to help to a conclusion, might be set down as carelessness. But in other references to authorities there is a perverse design. He says (p. 175), "Ovid is a witness of the similarity between the Greek and Gothic tongues—

> 'Exercent illi sociæ commercia linguæ,
> Graiaque quod Getico victa loquela sono est.'—Trist., v. x."

There is no use of asking whether these lines, taken in conjunction, make out his point, because Ovid did not join them, though both are in the Tristia. The upper line is in the tenth elegy of the Fifth Book, where he laments the years of exile, which seem many as those of the siege of Troy, and describes so forcibly the desolateness of his lot among a people in continual turbulence, among whom his acquisitions in the Roman refinements make him only a barbarian. The second line is from the second elegy of the same book.

and as nothing more is said of the Peukini, it is clear that they vacated Scandinavia to make room for the Sitones. Whither could they go? In answer to this question comes the triumphant conclusion, "that the Peukini were the very first Basternæ who passed over, and proceeded north-west till they emerged under the name of *Picti*, the *Pehtar*, or *Peohtar* of the Saxon chronicle, *Pehiti* of Witikind, and *Pehts* of ancient Scottish poets—and modern natives of Scotland and the north of England."[1]

Against such a complex ethnical genealogy as this it was not unnatural that the advocates of the Gallic or Celtic theory should pit the ancient province of Poitou, in France. Its ancient name simplified the question—it was called Pictavia, and its inhabitants were Pictavienses and Pictavi, and sometimes Pictones—a term used in common to them and to the Picts of Scotland. So closely do the two nomenclatures resemble each other in the Latin form, that many a reference to the French province has been read as referring to the country of the Picts in Scotland.

A fertile source of debate in the Pictish question was the etymology of the part of Scotland in which the Picts dwelt, as being of Celtic or of Teutonic origin. The contest was only deepened by the somewhat impartial distribution of the weapons available on either side; and it will be seen from the instances presently to be given, that both often laid claim to the same word, the one tracing it clearly to a Gothic origin, the other with equal decision to a Celtic. In their enthusiasm the two parties seem to have forgotten how little success could do in this shape without external aid. The clearest

[1] Dissertation on the Origin and Progress of the Scythians or Goths, p. 176.

proof that a mountain or a river has a Celtic name, only shows that at some time or other Celts had been there; it does not tell us when they were there. Names, as the experience of the world amply shows, live after the people who bestowed them have long disappeared, and that through successive races of occupants. There are native names in America and the Cape of Good Hope which have passed through Dutch and French occupancy, continue under British, and are likely to be continued by any other race that may be supreme where they are known. The name of a mountain or a river in Forfarshire or Aberdeenshire may be absolutely proved to be of Celtic origin, and yet this shows nothing farther than that at some time or other people speaking a Celtic language lived there. We know that at the present day, and for hundreds of years, the present Gothic people of Lowland Scotland have occupied their place, and for all that etymology can tell us to the contrary, their occupancy may go back to any period of the age of the world, or they may have been the successors of some other or earlier Gothic occupants, with a Celtic or any other race interposing between the two occupancies. In short, whatever other useful things topographic etymology may teach, it fails to tell us whether the Picts were Celts or Goths, as the specimens of this kind of work given in the accompanying note will show.[1]

[1] Rivers are naturally the best topics for topographical etymology, because they are the most distinct or the larger natural features of a country. About the position or boundaries of mountains, rocks, and forests, there may be dubieties; but the river, being of a separate element, is never confused with anything beside it. Hence, in taking what they have made of rivers, we take the etymologists in their surest position. Here, then, are certain Gothic derivations of names of rivers by Pinkerton: —"The rivers *Durness, Navern, Armisdale, Hallow Dale, Forsa, Thurso,*

In any list of names of the present day, such as that of a street directory, we can set apart the names belonging respectively to the English, the Welsh, the Lowland Scots, and the Highlanders, with an assurance that the classification, with no other information but

Wick, Dunbeath, Hemsdale, Brora, Uynes, Caran, Conan, Beaulie, are all Gothic. *Ness* is most ancient Gothic; *Nessus,* a river of Thrace near Abdera, mentioned by Laertius, and Iamblichus in the Life of Pythagoras, and many others. *Nairn, Findorn, Lossie, Spey,* are Gothic; the last name, *Spae,* means, I believe, the foam of any violent water. *Uggie, Ythan,* seem Gothic; as does *Don,* the name of the river in England upon which Doncaster stands. The *Tay* is by all appearance Gothic. *Tavus, Tau; aw* or *aa* is water, river, in the Northern and German tongues, as *Almund Aa,* Almund river, *Uldal aw,* Uldal river, hence *Te-aw, The River,* by eminence. Forth is perfect Gothic: *Fiorda, firth,* the mouth of a river; the Firth of Forth is a solecism, meaning the Firth of a Firth. The *Tweed* is surely Gothic, for the name superabounds in Denmark and Norway, though it be there generally given to towns, and spelt *Twede.* The pastoral streams that fall into the Tweed, *Gala, Etteric, Yarrow,* are Gothic; the last is also the name of a river in Northumberland, and is from the same root as *arrow,* implying swift. *Annan, Nith, Orr, Fleet, Cree,* seem all Gothic; *Nid,* a town in Iceland, the river *Nid* in the dutchy of Triers, in Germany; *Ora,* a river in Norway, and another in Sweden, and another in Fifeshire, with the lake *Ora; Fleet,* swift, *Stinsar, Girvan, Dun* or *Don, Air* (say *Ar*), *Irvin, Garnock,* are also Gothic."—Enquiry, i. 142-43.

Celtic derivations of rivers from detached passages from Chalmers's Caledonia, i. 37-50 :—

Awe, Ea, Avon.	"Aw, Ew, Ea, Ey, in the old Celtic signify water, a river. Aw in the British means a fluid, a flowing water, and is the root of a number of words denoting fluidity."
Naver or Navern.	"*Never* (British) signifies the gentle stream. *Var, Par,* signifies water."
Ythan.	"*Eddain,* or *Ethain,* in the British, signifies gliding."
Don, Doun.	"*Dwn* (British), *Don* (Ir.), signify a dark or dusky colour. *Dwvyn* (British), *Domhuin* or *Douin* (Ir.), mean deep; a quality for which the Aberdeenshire *Don* and the Ayrshire *Doun* are remarkable."
Tay.	"*Ta, Taw,* in the British, signify what spreads or expands; also tranquil, quiet."
Tweed.	"*Tuedd* (British), signifies what is on a side, or border; the border or limit of a country."

that conveyed by the names themselves, will be very nearly correct; if not correct as to the exact district of birth of the owner of the name, it will generally be found that his ancestors were born there. There is a

Yarrow.	"*Gare*, in Bas-Breton, signifies rapid. *Garw* (British), *Garbh* (Ir.), denotes what is rough or rugged, a torrent; these, by inflection, become Gharw, which, in composition, is pronounced *yarw*."
Nith, Nethy.	"*Nedd* or *Neth* (British) denotes a stream that forms *whirls* or *turns*. Nethy and Nethan are diminutives of the word."
Orr.	"*Oer* (British), cold, of a cold nature; but this stream probably derives its name from the British *Wyr*, denoting its brisk flow."
Cree.	"Signifies what is fresh or brisk (British)."
Irvine.	"*Ir-vin* (British) signifies a green margin; it derives its name from the verdure of its banks."
Connon.	"*Con-an* (British and Irish) signifies the narrow or contracted stream. *Cwn-an* (British) means the water which is apt to rise."
Carron.	"The Celtic *Car*, of which *Char* is the oblique case, signifies a winding, a bending: and *Car-an* means the winding water. *Caron* (British) signifies a strong or rough stream."

Pinkerton had no opportunity of triumphantly refuting these derivations, but he left a sort of protest against the efficiency of all Celtic etymology whatever :—

"The Celts being natural savages, and regarded as such by all writers of all ages, their tongue was simple and poor, whence they were always borrowing of others; while hardly in modern European language can one word derived from the Celtic be found. Our Celtic seers of etymology, ignorant of all these facts, derive modern words from the Celtic, without suspecting the real truth, that the Celtic words are derived from them. Without complete knowledge of the Gothic and its dialects, no man ought to meddle with Celtic etymology, else he will blunder in utter darkness. For want of this knowledge Mr Whitaker has derived near 3000 English words from the Welch, which had, in fact, past from the Belgic, Saxon, and Danish into the Welch; and most of them may be found in the Gothic, Theudesque, and Icelandic, to which they could never pass from the Welch. The Goths were the conquering people, and superior in all things to the Celts; and so numerous that they spread over all Europe and great part of Asia many centuries before Christ, while the Celts were pent up in two or three little corners."—Enquiry, i. 137, 138.

list of Pictish kings accepted as tolerably authentic; and it was the most natural alternative for inquirers of etymological tendencies to look to the names of that list for a revelation of the race to which their owners belonged. The nomenclature in early documents is, as we shall find, often influenced by the country of the writer. But even in those names of Pictish kings which have been accepted and examined by both parties, there is a quality for adaptation to their opposite purposes which is apt to bring scandal on etymology as a source of historical evidence.[1]

	Chalmers for the Celtic.	Pinkerton for the Gothic.	Jamieson, "Teutonic Etymons."
[1] Drust.	Probably the British name Trwst, which signifies din.	Drust, a common Pikish name, is also Persian, and signifies *sincerus*. . . . The Persians were the old Sythæ or Goths from whom the rest sprung.	Su. Goth., *troest*, *dristig*. Germ., *dreist*. Alem., *gidrost*, dareing.
Brudi or Bridei.	Brudw, which is pronounced Bridw or Bradw, is in the British treacherous.	Brudi is the real Gothic name; Bout is the wounded (Bott *ictus* Wachter).	Island., Briddi *eminebat*. verel: breid-a, to extend; and Sueo-Goth, *e*, law; Q. one who extends the law, who publishes it?
Talorc.	Talarw in the British signified harsh-fronted; Talerg, dark-fronted; Talorgan, splendid-fronted.	The name seems from Talian *dicere*. Tal *Sermo* Lye—the speaker, the commander.	Island., Tala, number or tale; and org *jurgium*, or orkan *vires*, strength.
Necton Morbet.	Nechton was probably the Nwython of the British, signifying a person full of energy.	Morbet-Moer *celebris famosus*. Beta *pascere, jungere equos currui*.	Island., Neck-a *incurvare* Tanne *dens*; Q. crooked tooth? or neck-ia *humiliare* ton *vox*; Q. low-sounding? Su. Goth, moer famous bet-a *vibrare*; Q. famous in brandishing the sword?

There remains one other process from which light was expected—a critical examination of the tenor of the passages in Greek and Roman authors by whom the Picts were mentioned. An impartial bystander would not expect much from such a source. These authors have left us no specific information about the structure of any of the great languages spoken by the people they came in contact with, whether in the north or in the south. We have no specimens of their vocabulary. We do not know in what sort of tongue the Carthagenians, the rivals of Rome herself, discoursed; and though Plautus makes a Carthagenian utter words which are not Latin, the labours of a large body of enthusiastic etymologists have been insufficient to prove that they are not a mere jumble of arbitrary sounds.[1] That the language of one people resembles or does not resemble that of another, is the utmost we are ever told. We have found Tacitus thus speaking about the Caledonians and the Silurians, but neither he nor

[1] Had some of these etymological critics been as successful as they believed they were, the utterances of the Carthagenian would have had an important connection with the present History, as showing that the Highlanders of Scotland and the Carthagenians were the same people. Colonel Vallancy made out that the Carthagenians spoke Irish or Gaelic; but less enthusiastic etymologists said he found too much—that he found Plautus dealing in idioms which, even in Vallancy's day, were recent. The passages in question are in the Pœnulus, and are in the scene where the Carthagenian arrives in search of his abducted daughters. He is said to speak *Punice*, or in Carthagenian. In the prologue it is said that he chooses to do so, though he knows other languages, but he is Punic, which in Rome is another word for deceptious.

A late popular writer of fiction, describing a Chinese army of several thousands fleeing from as many hundreds of Tartars, makes them, when they find themselves in safety, sing a song of triumph, the chorus of which is—"Souchong polli-hong, tea tum tilly lilly, tilly lilly tea tum, tea tum tea!" Plautus seems to have taken a like method with the Carthagenian. It is odd enough to observe that he seems to get tired of the labour of manufacturing words as the speech lengthens, and to lapse

Cæsar, who sometimes also compares in this vague manner, shows a consciousness of the radical difference that must have severed the Teutonic from the Celtic. There was a sort of breach of etiquette in the haughty Roman too minutely noticing the ways of the barbarians: it was about as indecorous as it would be for a noble family with a tree back to the Conquest making inquiry about the pedigree of a tradesman or a domestic. And as it happened, the writers who had to mention the Picts were among the most unlikely to be precise in geography or etymology. They were the later eulogistic poets and the panegyrists who in their fulsome tributes to a Theodosius or a Stilicho would think it more dignified to be vaguely picturesque than to be distinct and accurate about the barbarous tribes whom they punished for an insolent assertion of independence.

Yet, with all these elements of vagueness in them, our antiquaries have stood upon the letter of these passages as polemics have on Scriptural texts, when they could be animated by a meaning capable of serving their purposes. No greedy unreasonable clients, aided by unscrupulous lawyers, have founded more tenaciously on mere quibbles from words than these

into the sounds of his own language. The first two lines of Hanno's soliloquy are—

"Ythalonium vualonuth sicorathisma comsyth
Chym lachchunyth mumys tyalmyctibari imischi."

But after going on for ten lines of this kind, we have—

"Exanolim volanus succuratim misti atticum esse."

A little further on comes a tantalising line—

"Celtum commuero lueni, at enim auoso uber bent byach Aristoclem."

From the decided change so exemplified, a great authority has inferred that the first ten lines are Punic or Carthagenian, the other eight possibly Lybic!

critics have stood on the letter of some vague allusion to Pict, Scot, or Saxon. Nay, it had been well for the reputation of archæology as a science had they always adhered to the words as they were set before them, and done nothing more with them than found on them a pertinacious one-sided pleading.[1]

[1] We have seen already some of the liberties taken by Pinkerton, who lays down this maxim, "It may boldly be said that he who, in treating history, the grand instruction of mankind, does not place the evidence against, as well as for, before his readers, is a propagator of falsehood and an enemy of society."—Dissertation, 106. Boldly said, certainly. The writer of it would benefit by the theory, that excessive enthusiasts are dishonest from their very honesty. They have absolute faith in their theories; they are impatient of a stolid stupid world that will not adopt them; and they go into the kind of persuasives that will influence this stolid stupidity without caring how far there is truth in the details of the evidence, since the conclusion must be absolute truth.

The critics of this school sometimes took a more honest alternative, in finding that the classic author who did not conform to their views had made a mistake. Perhaps he had; and if the critic had stopped at that point he would have been doing a service; but his sagacity must needs enable him to discover the process of thought through which the mistake had arisen, and enable him to correct it. For instance, Claudian, in his panegyric on the fourth consulate of Honorius, has a rapid episode on the deeds of the hero's father, the conqueror alike of the north and the south, who passes from the heat of the Lybian sun upon his helmet to arctic ice and storms. After his generalities, the poet, looking out probably for sounding names with proper quantities, and quite unconscious of the legacy of strife he was leaving for Scottish antiquaries of the eighteenth century, has the following inextricable jumble:—

"Maduerunt Saxone fuso
Orcades; incaluit Pictorum sanguine Thule
Scotorum cumulos flevit glacialis Ierne."

The passage suited Pinkerton perfectly, when corrected as he knew how to correct it. Claudian had mistaken certain islands at the mouth of the Elbe, now submerged, for the Orkneys—"These isles were opposite to the Orkneys, according to Ptolemy, and Claudian has, from ignorance or want of memory, confounded them. His verses evidently mean, in bombastic praise, to assert that Theodosius, not content with repelling the Saxons, Piks, and Scots, chastised them all in their original seats, the iles of the Saxon, here absurdly called Orcades."—Enquiry, i. 187. Ptolemy's geographical arrangements do not quite fit into Pinkerton's for bringing the Peukini from the Black Sea to Scotland, and therefore he

This brief survey of the great Pictish controversy thus leaves nothing but a melancholy record of wasted labour and defeated ambition. It has been more fruitless than a polemical or a political dispute, for these leave behind them, either for good or evil, their marks upon the conduct and character of the populations among whom they have raged; while here a vast outlay of learning, ingenuity, enthusiasm, and, it must be added, temper, have left no visible monument but a pile of forbidding volumes, in which should any one who has not studied the matter fundamentally expect to find instructive information, he will assuredly be led into a tangled maze of unintelligible pedantry, from which he will come forth with no impression but a nightmare-feeling of hopeless struggle with difficulties. In another sense, it may be literally said of the controversy that it has but "pointed a moral" and "adorned a tale." Scott, who caught a cautious glimpse of it from a distance, took in at once its ludicrous proportions; and it is likely that posterity will remember the Pictish question in the discussion between Monkbarns and Sir Arthur Wardour after the volumes of Whitaker, Goodall, Pinkerton, Chalmers, Ritson, and Grant have been long entombed in their proper shelves.[1]

says, "As one or two Sarmatic tribes extended beyond the Chronos and Berystenes, he improperly puts the Vistula as the boundary between the Germans and Sarmatæ; though Tacitus, who wrote about fifty years before, had specially mentioned German nations beyond the Vistula, and the vast people of Peukini or Basternæ in particular, whom Pliny puts as one-fifth part of the Germans. But Ptolemy, living at the great distance of Alexandria, in Egypt, and probably not even understanding Latin, seems not to have read either Pliny or Tacitus, but puts his places according to the maps and itineraries of the generals, and to the Greek geographers." Here, along with his correction of Ptolemy, he indulges in his own frequently-repeated mistake of Pliny's fifth part of Germany.

[1] The extent to which Scott looked at, rather than shared in, the con-

This failure must not be counted a reproach to the science of etymology, which indeed was accomplishing elsewhere its most distinguished conquests, while this obscure war raged afar off. The lesson it teaches is not to ask of a science what it cannot give. Etymology can only profitably accompany a substructure of facts, which it harmonises and adorns. When put to service alone, it runs wild, and is lost in abstraction.

And even had we possessed a sufficient basis of fact to enable us to say whether the Picts spoke an absolutely Celtic or an absolutely Gothic tongue, we would have required still more to tell us who they were among the families of men. The language of a whole people will generally point to the race prevailing among them, but it does not entirely prove even that. Among a Celtic-speaking people, we may hold it certain that a portion are of Celtic race, but what proportion this may be will depend upon many historical conditions; as, for instance, on the size of the instalments in which strangers have mixed among them. It is easy to suppose an instance where a small band of strangers comes and becomes absorbed, speaking speedily the language of the original natives; then comes another and another instalment, each in its turn becoming absorbed, and each adding to the power of absorption, and enabling it more effectually to obliterate the distinctive national tongue of their forefathers. We know that in the West Highlands considerable bands of Northmen became absorbed in the Celtic population. France, beyond a doubt, sucked colony after colony of the Teutonic races into the influence of her Celto-Latin

troversy, may be seen in his article in the Quarterly Review for July 1829, on Ritson's Annals of the Caledonians, Picts, and Scots.

speech. The history of one of these we know well. The Normans forgot their homes and their broad Teutonic tongue, and became the leaders in all accomplishments essentially French. When they came over to this country as thoroughly naturalised Frenchmen, they had, after a tough struggle, again to bow to the authority of the Teutonic forms of speech.

Since etymology has been found so feeble a help through the Pictish difficulty, there has naturally been a desire to try what can be gained through that other aid of history on which the hopes and labours of investigators have lately been devoted—the testimony of ancient remains. But whatever is to be accomplished here is still in prospect, and will require new examinations and classifications. We have seen how little is to be really learned from a hopeful coincidence between the habits of the Germans, as told by Tacitus, and the underground works called Picts' Houses. The close examination lately given to the vestiges of ancient art seems to promise better results. Common elements have been found and classified in the sculptured stones from Northumberland to the south of Ireland; and the most ancient types of this school of art are found in the territory inhabited by the Picts. But until we have several other points adjusted, and especially the dates at which the art of stone decoration reached its several stages of development, we have yet gained nothing certain in this direction.

Meanwhile, since each of the cunning devices of criticism by which the great Pictish secret was to be divulged has proved futile in its turn, there is nothing for it but to return to where we were before the adepts began their work, and content ourselves with

the old and rather obvious notion that by *Picti* the Romans merely meant painted people, without any consideration about their race, language, or other ethnical specialties. The painting of the skin was a distinctive characteristic, which seems to have excited curiosity even among the haughty Romans, and their authors frequently notice it. Julius Cæsar tells how, among other utterly savage practices, the Britons of the south —who were all that he saw—painted themselves in blue, to be terrible to their enemies in battle.[1] It has been fairly enough inferred, from the emphasis which Cæsar puts on this practice, that it was new to him, and that he had not met with it among the Gauls; and other negative evidence supports the belief that among them the war-paint was not practised. The painting practices of the Britons, as reported by the Roman invaders, are the object of many allusions of a picturesque or sarcastic kind in ancient literature. Herodian insinuates that they did not wear clothes, lest these might spoil the fine paintings of figures on the skin. Ovid, indulging in uncomfortable and unsightly pictures, brings up, among others, the Britons as green, probably because that colour afforded him a more convenient quantity for his line than Cæsar's blue.[2] Martial calls them by the name afterwards applied to their northern neighbours, "Picti," in an epigram hitting at some fashionable barbarian importation.[3] Again, when

[1] De Bel. Gal., v. 14.

[2] "Non ego Pelignos videor celebrare salubres,
Non ego natalem, rura paterna, locum,
Sed Scythiam Cilicasque feros viridesque Britannos."
—Am., ii. 16.

[3] "Barbara de Pictis veni bascauda Britannis,
Sed me jam mavult dicere Roma suam."
—Ep., xiv. 99.

he compliments Claudia Rufina on the possession of the refinements of her Roman ancestors, although she was born among the Britons, he calls them blue, like Cæsar.[1] Lucan, writing when the South Britons were probably abandoning paint, and talking of them in the past, when Cæsar was conquering them, calls them the yellow Britons.[2]

After South Britain had been for centuries a Roman province, the inhabitants had long ceased to paint themselves, and hence this practice was a specialty distinguishing the independent tribes in the north. It does not appear that the Scottish immigrants from Ireland were self-painters, and hence the distinction between Scots and Picts.

It must be admitted that it is not so much from any precise enunciation of intention that the word Picti is supposed to have been thus given to the Britons of the north, as from the general context of its use.[3] In this

[1] XI. 54.—De Claudia Rufina nata in Britannia.

[2] "Flavis . . . mista Britannis."—III. l. 78. But some commentators suppose that the colour here applies only to the hair.

[3] "Non dico Calledonum aliorumque Pictorum." Of other passages which point to the painting as the origin of the name, take the two following from Claudian, quoted *passim* in the Pictish controversy of the victories of Theodosius—

> "Ille leves Mauros, nec falso nomine Pictos
> Edomuit, Scotumque vago mucrone secutus
> Fregit Hyperboreas remis audacibus undas."
> —De Tertio Consulatu Honorii, 54-56.

> "Venit et extremis legio prætenta Britannis
> Quæ Scoto dat frena truci, ferroque notatas
> Perlegit exangues Picto moriente figuras."
> —De Bello Getico, 416-18.

Isidorus, an author of the end of the sixth century, says of the Picts (the word he uses is Scoti, but in this instance the universal vote of the critics that this was a lapse of the pen may be admitted), "Propria lingua nomen habent a picto corpore, eo quod aculeis ferreis cum atramento variarum figurarum stigmate annotentur."—Monumenta, cii.

there is a careless way of mentioning the barbarian tribes in the mass by one conspicuous feature, affording a simple clue to many passages which put criticism at defiance when it attempts to extract an accurate and precise meaning from them. For instance, that earliest of all known allusions to the Picts in the Eulogium of the orator Eumenius, already referred to, speaks of the Caledonians and other Picti. This has caused a world of acute criticism, certain adepts holding that the passage is inverted, and should have been Picts and other Caledonians; while others have inquired in vain who were the remaining tribes that combined with the Caledonians to make up the nation of the Picts. That Eumenius spoke in utter indifference of precision is the one fact on which we can found with confidence; and if we hold him as speaking of the Caledonians and other painted people, without caring whether the Caledonians were only a part of the painted tribes, or might include the whole of them, we save the trouble of further examination, and get a more natural interpretation than the critics can give us.

It may seem inconsistent with common historical experience that a term thus vaguely applied should become the established name of a people, among their neighbours and in the history of the times, remaining with them when they had a form of government and a fixed position among nations, and continued as a memorial of the past after they ceased to be a separate state. The early British Christian authors, however—Adamnan, Bede, and others—writing in Latin, took the name which the Romans had used, and the vernacular chroniclers of Scandinavia and Saxony corrupted it into Pecht, Pechtar, and its other variations, when they

rendered the Latin of the churchmen into their own vernacular. We do not know what the Picts called themselves in their own language. In the brief chronicles of their kings, written in Latin, and doubtless the work of churchmen, they are called Picti. The Irish Celts gave them the name of Cruithne or Cruithnach;[1] and they were called, as we were told by the commentators on the Irish chroniclers, the Guidel Fechti.

Overlying the little that we absolutely know of the people called Picti there is a great fact, that at a very

[1] "The name of Picti was most probably given vaguely by the Romans to all the extra-provincial tribes who adhered to the custom of self-painting. *Cruithin-Tuath, Peohta-Theode,* is occasionally used by the Irish writers for North Britain; and the name of Cruithnach may have been acknowledged at an early period by the people themselves, though scarcely as a generic appellation, belonging rather to a confederacy than to a people."—Robertson's Scotland under her Early Kings, ii. 369. Such is the simple conclusion of the latest author who has gone over the ground with learning and diligence. It is a rather significant comment on the futility of much intermediate research and debate that it should closely coincide with the view of the first critical inquirer into these matters, the venerable Father Innes:—"That the people who began to be called Picts in the third and after ages were truly and properly the same people with the Caledonians and other ancient Britons of the north, will as yet further and more distinctly appear by examining the origin or first rise and occasion of the name of Picti or Picts in Britain, and showing that it was not originally the proper name of the people so called, brought in with them to the island, or a name which they gave themselves, but a general denomination given by the Romans, in or about the third age of Christianity, to the Caledonians, and not to them alone, but to all the ancient unconquered inhabitants of North Britain, from their continuing the custom of painting or marking figures on their bodies, as a mark distinguishing them from the provincial or conquered Britons, who, upon submitting to the Roman laws and polity, had laid aside the use of painting with the rest of their former customs, esteemed barbarous by the Romans. And this name of Picti being once fixed by the Romans and provincial Britons that spoke the Latin tongue, and appropriated to the northern unconquered inhabitants, was afterwards retained, with little alteration, in the vulgar tongues, by the Britons and Saxons, as were the proper names of cities; and the same name was expressed in the equivalent term of Cruithneach by the Irish and ancient Scots."—I. 57, 58.

early period—whenever, indeed, the inhabitants of Scotland come forward in European history—the territory of old assigned to the Picts was occupied by a people thoroughly Gothic or Teutonic, whether they were the descendants of the large-limbed and red-haired Caledonians of Tacitus, or subsequently found their way into the country. To the southward of the Forth, we know pretty well that they were the Saxons of Deira and Bernicia, superseding the Romanised Britons; but all along northwards the Lowlands were covered with people of the same origin. Those who see their descendants at the present day acknowledge the Teutonic type to be purer in them than in the people of England. How far Celtic blood may have mingled with their race we cannot tell, but it was the nature of their language obstinately to resist all admixture with the Gælic. The broadest and purest Lowland Scots is spoken on the edge of the Highland line. It ought, one would think, to be a curious and instructive topic for philology to deal with, that while the established language of our country—of England and Scotland—borrows at all hands,—from Greek, from Latin, from French,—it takes nothing whatever, either in its structure or vocabulary, from the Celtic race, who have lived for centuries in the same island with the Saxon-speaking races, English and Scotch.

Having looked at the territorial condition of the Romanised Britons in the first place, and next to that of the Picts, who occupied the greater part of the country, let us now turn to that of the Irish Celts in the west, who are represented by the Highlanders of the present day. Causes of obscurity and contradiction formerly made the history of their connection

with Scotland as inextricable as that of the Picts. It was, indeed, in worse case, for it was set forth in a distinct narrative, which all who were acquainted with the real sources of knowledge on the matter knew to be false. Now, however, these obstructions have been cleared away, and we know distinctly who they were and whence they came.

When Scotia, or the land of the Scots, is spoken of by writers in the earlier centuries of Christianity, they refer not to the country now called Scotland, but to Ireland. The concurrence of evidence on this point is so complete and distinct, that it would be a waste of words to refer to individual authorities. The writings of Bede and Adamnan, the letters of the popes and fathers during the eighth and ninth centuries, and all the historical vestiges referring to portions of the earth so obscure in these ages, are quite distinct in their reference to Ireland. At the same time, the earliest references to the Scots in Greek or Roman writers speak of them as fighting against the Romanised Britons in Northern Britain. How they were first referred to as existing in the country to which they afterwards gave a name, will have to be presently told —the coincidence is an apology for patriotic writers, not acquainted with the historical resources now available, becoming indignant at efforts to abbreviate the antiquity of their country.[1]

[1] Walter Goodall, a vehement vindicator of everything popularly considered typical of Scotch nationality, was so angry at the proposal to shift old Scotia to Ireland, that, not content with struggling against the transference, he threatened to prove that the other ancient name of Ireland, Ierne, belonged to Scotland. He found the "glacialis Ierne," which, according to Claudian, wept for her slain Scots in Strathearn, and that by a process much more simple than Pinkerton's guidance of the Picts out of Peukć.

There are other reasons why it became a tedious and rather invidious process to withdraw the history of the early Scots from present Scotland, and restore it to its true owners. The Scots of the early centuries acquired considerable fame over Europe; and when their name passed into another country, this fame went with it. It served to make Caledonian Scotland more remarkable among nations than she otherwise would have been, and naturally made her sons more reluctant to part with so honourable a birthright. While the great revolution that broke the power of the Empire was raging throughout the central territories of Europe, and even as far as the Firth of Forth, the Christian Church enjoyed a kind of repose in Ireland. We shall have occasion to see how numerous, powerful, and cultivated a body of ecclesiastics flourished there, apart from the world, and independent of any separate European control. In this tranquil prosperity the Irish Church was so cherished and strengthened, that, as the storm subsided here and there throughout Europe, Irish ecclesiastics and scholars—Scots, as they were termed—were found establishing themselves everywhere as ecclesiastical leaders and teachers. Ireland, or Scotia, was called the Land of the Saints. Several religious houses were founded in their favour, to retain in the districts where they arose the services of men so distinguished. Some of these survived to later times, and carried over, not merely the fame of their early history, but the dignities and emoluments of the foundation, to the country to which the name of Scotia was transferred. The history of one of these especially shows how obstinately the notion established itself that present Scotland had always been Scotland.

There existed from a very early age, at Ratisbon or Regensburg, an affluent religious house, called the Scottish Monastery.[1] It was enriched and enlarged at the beginning of the twelfth century, and became a sort of head or metropolitan over a number of minor houses, originally connected, like itself, with the priesthood who had wandered from Ireland. In later times, and down to its suppression in the year 1847, it was treated as exclusively belonging to natives of Scotland. Its private annals, however, relate how, so lately as the fifteenth century, the Irish fought for its retention or its restoration, and were beaten. The local authorities were clear that the Scottish monastery belonged to Scotland, and treated the partial possession of it by Irish ecclesiastics as an invasion. They were finally driven out in the year 1515. Leo the Tenth issued a bull, restoring it to its proper owners, the inhabitants of Scotland.[2]

Such incidental matters are noted for the purpose of impressing on the reader the importance of remembering not only that the names Scot and Scotland originally belonged to Ireland, but that for a long period this was not admitted by our historians, who arrogated everything that could be attributed to the Scots as referring to natives of North Britain. The recollection of these two facts will obviate much confusion in looking into the foundations both of North British and of Irish history. Further on I shall endeavour to show how the name passed over from the one country to the

[1] Schottenkirche Benedictiner Stifts S. Jacob.

[2] Collection in the Scots Colleges Abroad, by the late James Dennistoun of Dennistoun, in the Advocates' Library. The Irish were charged with having made a fraudulent entry in the records of the establishment, in which they described Ireland as "Great Scotland."

other; in the mean time let us return to the early migration of the Scots from Ireland to Scotland.

All that can be said of the term Scot or Scotus is, that the Roman writers fell upon it in some way, and it became their name for the inhabitants of Ireland, and the colonies which had migrated from Ireland to Scotland. Neither the word itself, nor anything from which it has been obviously latinised, is found in the old Celtic writers about Ireland. Attempts to connect the name with the Scythians, and to derive it from Greek words which have a close resemblance, or from Celtic words which have a distant and indistinct resemblance to it, prove, for any useful historical purpose, to be mere etymological pastimes. All we know is, that the term was used by writers, heathen and Christian, of the Latin language, when speaking of Irishmen; and that the term, which these Irishmen did not apply to themselves, and perhaps never had heard that others applied to them, came by a transition, which the following pages will explain, to be the name of another country.

We have seen that the Scots are first spoken of in the year 360 as a well-known tribe by Ammianus Marcellinus, who served as a soldier in Gaul, and was likely to have a familiar acquaintance with the various enemies of the Roman power. He speaks repeatedly of their attacks on the Romanised Britons in the middle of the fourth century; and Claudian the poet, who belonged to the immediately following generation, triumphs over the chastisements inflicted on them by his hero Stilicho; and though he refers to their incursions on the Romanised Britons, connects them with their proper country by representing Ireland weeping for her

slain Scots. It is at the same period that St Jerome tells with horrible distinctness how, when a little boy in Gaul, he had himself seen the Scots, a people from Britain, eating human flesh; and though they were surrounded by swine, cattle, and sheep, yet would they cut off the buttocks of the herdsmen, or the breasts of women, and eat them as special luxuries. How a little boy could have seen such things any one may question, but that the saint has recorded such his experience is undoubted. The portion of these Scots who emigrated to Ireland are said to have passed over in one body under the leadership of Erc, a descendant of Cairbre-Riadha. But as Erc belonged to the beginning of the sixth century, and the Scots had been fighting in North Britain in the fourth century, it was necessary to admit at least one previous exodus. It is one of the habits of chroniclers to attribute to some one event under one man what has been done by long degrees, as the result of the practice of the people. The Scots seem to have oozed out of the north of Ireland upon the western coast of Scotland and its archipelago. The countries are nearer to each other than we are accustomed to think; from one great seaport to another, as from Greenock to Belfast or Drogheda, is a considerable voyage, but the Mull of Cantyre in Argyleshire is only twelve miles distant from the county of Antrim. Thus, if we suppose them spreading by slow degrees over Argyleshire and the Western Islands, the passage from Ireland to Scotland may not have been in the general case the longest of their sea-voyages, or the one great conspicuous type of their migration, like a journey to Canada or Australia in the present day, or even like the journeys of the men of Scandinavia and Friesland to settle in Britain.

However they may have first found their way to Ireland, these Celtic Scots have never been addicted, like their Teutonic neighbours, to long sea-voyages. One acquainted with the agricultural resources of the north of Ireland at the present day might question the inducement of a people to leave that region for the sake of settling in the west of Scotland. But it is observable of the Celts, as of other indolent races, that the elements of value to them are not the resources capable of development through industry and enterprise, but those which offer the readiest supply of some of the necessaries of life. Thus they are to be found near the peat-bog, which bears on its surface a cake of inferior fuel immediately accessible, while the industrious races settle over the coal-seam, which gives nothing promptly, but affords a rich reward to enterprise and exertion. In their new homes the Scots would find abundant fuel. But the geological character of the country would also supply them with a limited quantity of alluvial soil fit for immediate cultivation. It was found on the deltas of the mountain-streams, on the narrow straths around their margin, and occasionally in hollows containing alluvial deposits, which might have been the beds of ancient lakes. These patches of fruitful ground the first immigrants would find ready for use. Modern agriculture has indeed been able to add very little to their area, and has wisely determined that sheep-farming is the proper use of those tracts of mountain among which the alluvial patches are thinly scattered. It is a curious coincidence worth remembering, that those very lands in northern Ireland which the ancestors of the Scottish Highlanders abandoned, were afterwards eagerly sought and occupied by Scottish Lowlanders as a promising

field of industrial enterprise. Thus there were Scots in Ireland and Scots in Britain, and a practice arose among British writers of calling the latter Atta-cotti, which has been explained to mean the hither Scots, or the Scots of this side. But to keep clear of confusion in wandering among the old authorities, it is also necessary to remember that there were among these Scots Dalriads both in Ireland and Argyle, and in each country a territory called Dalriada. It has naturally enough been questioned whether the migration from Ireland can have been extensive enough to account for so large a Gaelic-speaking population as that of the west and north of Scotland became. It seems never to have been seriously doubted, however, that the language of these people was fundamentally the Irish Celtic; and indeed it was ever called by the Teutonic Scotch, Irish, Ersh, or Erse. We shall see that in the time of Columba the properly Irish colony of Scots did not spread beyond the latitude of Iona, and that the country northward was part of the dominion of the king of the Picts. But there is good reason to believe that the Irish was a spreading language. Such as it was, it was completed for the uses of a people who occupied a far higher grade in civilisation than any of their neighbours, except the Romanised Britons, whose day was passing away just as the Scots were spreading and prevailing. It was a language not only calculated for the public and domestic uses of civilisation, but it became a literary language earlier than any of the Teutonic tongues. Devotional books and histories were written in it, and it spread the Bible, and even classic authors in translations. The obscurity in which the language of the Picts has rested is itself evidence that, whether Celtic or Teutonic, it

had not reached the same grade, or become available for the same services, as the Irish. That this spread among the Picts we can only infer. We know, historically, that in the west, group after group of Norse invaders were absorbed into the Irish-speaking population. Although the Norsemen were conquerors of the Highland region, and gave it monarchs and lords, the more civilised language absorbed the ruder though fundamentally stronger, and all spoke the Irish together. Thus, in language, the Teutonic became supreme in the eastern lowlands, the Celtic among the western mountains. From a general view of the whole question, an impression—but nothing stronger than an impression—is conveyed, that the proportion of the Teutonic race that came into the use of the Gaelic is larger than the proportion of the Celtic race that came into the use of the Teutonic or Saxon. Perhaps students of physical ethnology may thus account for the contrasts of appearance in the Highlands: in one district the people being large-limbed and fair, with hair inclined to red; in others, small, lithe, and dusky, with black hair.

Whether it was by this absorption or otherwise, the Scottish Dalriada became a powerful state. When it was in close intercourse with the mother country, the name of Scot became common to the inhabitants of either—they might come from Ireland or from Argyle. These came to be distinguished from the Irish as the Scots of Albania. Sometimes authors speak of the two Scotias, the larger and the smaller.[1] It is not safe to count that the word Scot must mean a native of present Scotland, when the period dealt with is earlier than the

[1] Columba is called "utriusque Scotiæ patronus," Ireland being Major Scotia.—Colgan, Thaumaturga.

middle of the twelfth century. Marianus, a great ecclesiastic in Germany, who was among the earliest of the medieval authors to attempt a general history of the world, lived in the latter part of the eleventh century. He was called Marianus Scotus. He speaks of himself and his country, from which he was obliged to migrate on account of religious disputes, but he does not tell which of the Scotlands he was born in. He speaks of others of his countrymen as Scoti, and in the midst of all narrates the death of King Duncan in *Scotia*. By that time Ireland had become more divided and disintegrated than it was of old, while the colony of Irish Scots in Albania had been enlarging, and absorbing neighbouring territory. Through this process, and a concurrence of historical events, the descendant of the chief of British Dalriada became a monarch reigning over a large and tolerably compact state. By a sort of law of attraction, the term Scotia gradually loosened its hold on the old country, and, attaching itself entirely to the new, gave it the name by which it is known in history.

CHAPTER VI.

Heathendom.

DRUIDISM THE POPULAR SOLVER OF DIFFICULTIES—INQUIRY HOW FAR IT EXISTED AND HAD INFLUENCE—THE BRIEFNESS AND UNCERTAINTY OF CÆSAR'S ACCOUNT—THE IMPORTANCE ATTRIBUTED TO IT—FAINTNESS OF OTHER ANCIENT REFERENCES—NECESSITY OF HELPING THEM BY MODERN IMAGINATION—UNKNOWN AS OPPONENTS TO THE EARLY SAINTS AND CHRISTIAN MISSIONARIES—THE MAGI AS ENCOUNTERED BY THESE—THE MAGI IN SCOTLAND—DOMESTIC REVELATIONS ABOUT ONE OF THEM—HOW FAR THE MYTHOLOGY OF THE NORSE EDDAS PREVAILED IN SCOTLAND—ITS SPIRIT AS CHARACTERISTIC OF THE PEOPLE—PREVALENCE OF MANHOOD OVER CUNNING—ABSENCE OF THE IMPURITIES INCIDENT TO OTHER PAGAN SYSTEMS—ITS DOMESTICITY—ITS ADAPTATION TO THE PHYSICAL AS WELL AS THE MORAL CONDITIONS OF THE NORTHERN NATIONS—INCOMPATIBILITY WITH CLASSICAL AND ORIENTAL SYSTEMS.

To all inquiries as to the religion from which the inhabitants of North Britain were converted when they became Christians, there has generally been an easy answer, Of course it was from Druidism. That term has been used in history much in the same way as the names of general but undefined causes have been used in physics—to bring out a complete result without the trouble of inquiry. It is thus that we have had the theories of antipathies and affinities, animal spirits, the sensorium, phlogiston, and the like; and

thus too have been frequently employed such terms as electric currents and magnetic influences.

It is appropriate to all these solvents of difficulties, which have passed current from time immemorial, and are accepted without examination, that there are no strict boundaries to their sphere of application. Whenever the difficulty arises, the solvent is at hand without a question whether its application has limits which have been passed. What is said of old about the Druids is applicable to the Celts, as distinguished from the Germans. Those who have gone into the causes of Druidism attribute its vast power and mysterious influence to the special proneness of the Celtic tribes to subject themselves to the influence of some priesthood, while the Gothic people were shy of any intervention by human beings between themselves and the mighty deities they idolised. Yet in modern literature we find Druidism applied to the Gothic as readily as to the Celtic nations, and that although there are full means of being acquainted with the religion of those nations, and of knowing that it was something entirely different from the system brought into shape under the name of Druidism.

Modern authors, succeeding each other, have filled up the details of that system, and made it almost as complete as the Romish hierarchy. We have Archdruids and simple Druids; some set to this kind of work, some to that. We are told of the doctrines that they taught, and especially what they thought of the immortality of the soul. We are told of their various arrangements for exercising the influence of mystery on their deluded followers, and for preserving in profound secrecy the traditions of their order and the

sources of their influence. Their costume, their pomp and ceremonies, are accurately described. They were long-bearded men clothed in white, and went forth with golden sickles to cut the mistletoe at the appointed hour of doom. We have their temples among us in a very distinct condition, with the altars on which they offered up human sacrifices, and the mystic signs which they left on the rock pillars which of old stood in the centres of their sacred groves.

After reading all that is thus piled up with the solemn gravity of well-founded knowledge, it is positively astounding to look back and see on how small and futile a foundation it all rests. When we are told of the interesting mysteries that surround the functions of this potent priesthood, we are led to a real source of mystery—how to account for the perverse ingenuity which framed such a baseless system, and for the marvellous credulity that accepted it as solid truth. The foundation of the whole is that short passage by Cæsar so well known. He unbends himself from the solemn narrative of the aggrandisement of Rome under his guidance, and speaks of one or two of the curious matters that came under his notice in the country of the barbarians. First we have these Druids, who direct religious ceremonies, decide controversies, teach youth, hold annual assemblies, and make mighty osier cages like gigantic images, in which they burn human beings, —who were acquainted with the Greek character, and committed some of their secrets to writing. Next among curiosities is the unicorn that roams in the Hyrcinian forest, and another animal, frequenting the same district, which has no knee-joints, cannot consequently rise when it is once down, and, owing to this

weakness, is caught by cutting through the tree against which it leans at night. The scornful carelessness with which he spoke of such matters becomes at once apparent when, after having spoken of the priesthood, he speaks of their deities. The chief object of their devotion is Mercury, and next in order come Apollo, Mars, Jupiter, and Minerva, so that these Druids were either humble imitators of the Roman form of polytheism, or Cæsar spoke without knowing or caring what he said. The credulous mind of the elder Pliny seems to have found an interest in a people so peculiar, and he adds to what Cæsar says a little information after his own fashion. Among his supernatural wonders, one is the anguineum or serpents' egg, which the Druids used as a universal medicine or medical amulet. He had seen one; it was about the size of an apple. It was not laid by one animal, but collectively by a group of serpents, and he who secured it had to take flight on a fleet horse to escape the pursuit and vengeance of the plundered serpents.

When there are strong controlling influences at work over large bodies of mankind, whether in a political or ecclesiastical shape, we expect to encounter them and their practices in the history of the times. We are to suppose that throughout all the great Gaulish tribes there was, as our modern historians tell us that there was, a potent hierarchy holding supreme spiritual authority over the people and their secular rulers. They had the entire control over the education of the people, being alike the repositories of the venerable traditions of the past, and the recipients of all recent knowledge. They were the supreme judges in all disputes, and ratified their decisions by excommunication. Their rank and influence were made manifest to the eyes of

the people by imposing ceremonies and awful sacrifices, of which human lives were an element. They were still further strengthened by their annual assemblies in the heart of Europe, whence each carried to his district a delegation from the central power of the vast corporation. We are told that all this was venerable in Cæsar's time, and that it lasted throughout the Gaulish nations, until one by one they were received into the bosom of the Christian Church.

What we naturally expect is to meet with the influence of this power, and with the doings of the persons who wielded it, in history. The history of Europe from Cæsar's time to the reign of Constantine is sufficiently full of events; but we find no Druids concerned in them. Occasionally in rhetoric prose, or in poetry, they are brought up to give picturesqueness to the scene; as where Tacitus, in his narrative of the capture of Mona, describes the shrieking women and the band of Druids invoking the gods; and Lucan, when enumerating the evils that befall unhappy Gaul when Cæsar crosses the Rubicon on his way back, makes the Druids resume their mysterious orgies. But we never meet with any distinct political result of their collective influence, nor are we ever brought in contact with an individual Druid as a historical personage. No doubt, in modern books, persons of celebrity in the ancient world are said to have been Druids, but this is because their authors have concluded that they must have belonged to that order, not because they are so called by any contemporary writer.[1] A Druid is indeed a being rarely individual-

[1] So Mr Godfrey Higgins, in a very learned quarto volume on the Celtic Druids, startles his reader by the announcement that Virgil was a Druid. Of Abaris, who, according to Herodotus, came from the Hyperboreans,

ised in the literature of the latter Empire, and it has rather tended to confute the received notions of the hierarchy, that some—perhaps the greater number—of those individually mentioned are female Druids.[1]

The most distinct accounts, indeed, that we possess of Druids coming forward in the flesh and transacting business with human beings, are in some anecdotes told by Vopiscus, one of the Augustine historians, about certain Druids of the feminine gender. One of these, whom Diocletian met in a tavern in Germany, predicted to him that he should be emperor after he had slain the Aper. Though he slew many an "aper" or boar without the predicted result, it came when

conveyed on the silver arrow which Apollo had hidden among them, Mr Higgins says, "he appears to have been a priest of Apollo, and an Irish or Celtic Druid."—'The Celtic Druids, or an Attempt to show that the Druids were the Priests of Oriental Colonies who migrated from India, and were the Introducers of the First or Cadmean System of Letters, and the Builders of Stonehenge, of Carnac, and of other Cyclopean Works in Asia and Europe. By Godfrey Higgins, Esq.' P. 32.

[1] Mr Higgins, however, is the interpreter of one very notable instance, in which Lucian reports a conversation he had with a Druid:—

"There is a story told by Lucian, and cited by Mr Tolland, which is very curious. He relates that in Gaul he saw Hercules represented by a little old man, whom in the language of the country they called Ogmius, drawing after him an infinite multitude of persons, who seemed most willing to follow, though dragged by extremely fine and almost imperceptible chains, which were fastened at one end to their ears, and held at the other, not in either of Hercules's hands, which were both otherwise employed, but tied to the tip of his tongue, in which there was a hole on purpose, where all those chains centred. Lucian, wondering at this manner of portraying Hercules, was informed by a learned Druid who stood by, that Hercules did not in Gaul, as in Greece, betoken strength of body, but force of eloquence; which is thus very beautifully displayed by the Druid in his explication of the picture that hung in the temple."—P. 20.

Here Mr Higgins relies on Tolland's reading, instead of going to Lucian, as he easily could, for he was an excellent scholar. Perhaps he anticipated that the reference would not be satisfactory, for Lucian says nothing of a Druid. The person who addressed him was Κελτος τις παρεστως—a Celt standing by.

he stabbed Arrius Aper, whom he accused of murdering the Emperor Numerian. Again, Vopiscus tells how Claudius Aurelianus consulted some Druidesses on the chances of the empire continuing in his posterity, and got some assurances about the lustre of the name of Claudius, which were fulfilled, but in a shape which made the answer equivocal.

Turning from the question how far individual Druids appear to have been recognised as persons of importance, and looking for any passages which connect them as a body practically with any political transaction, the most important is a short announcement by Suetonius, an author not given to verbosity. He says that the religion of the Druids, which had been denounced by Augustus, was extinguished by Claudius.[1] Were we strictly to interpret this after the fashion too common in dealing with such questions, there would be an end of Druidism early in the first century.

Whatever became of their worship, however, the Druids, such as they were, seem to have survived. Tacitus speaks of them in Mona some years later; and if we are to believe the stories of Vopiscus, the female part of the order did duty down to the third century.

Whatever they may have been in Cæsar's day, it would seem from these stories and some incidental notices that they were a set of people supposed to be endowed with gifts of divination and a certain limited power to work mischief—something partaking of the witch and the Bohemian of later times. Whatever fundamental reason there may be for it, it is certain, that in later times the beings endowed by popular

[1] "Druidarum religionem apud Gallos diræ immanitatis, et tantum, civibus sub Augusto interdictam, penitus abolevit."—Lib. v.

superstition with such supernatural powers have always been despised as inferiors, and despitefully treated accordingly, instead of being regarded with an awe and veneration commensurate with their high endowments. In all European countries, the witches who held in their hands the issues of life and death, and the Bohemians who looked into the seeds of time, have been under social ban among the ordinary mortals who aspired to no such powers. This was when they mixed with the world, and brought their sybilline qualities in contact with the vulgar daily life of a partial civilisation; while still connected with the native wilds where they inherited their gifts, they have been viewed with the toleration conceded to the other picturesque features of savage life. So when the "Egyptians" came first to Europe to exercise their mystic functions in their Oriental finery, they were received with a respectful awe. The second-sighted Highland seer in the far Lewis is a different person from the mendicant fortune-teller who finds his way to the manufacturing districts. The witches that dance on the Brocken on Valpurgis Eve would be spoken of in a different spirit from the village hag who spavins the horse and curdles the milk. Even the red American's medicine-man is somebody in the forest, but a nuisance when he gets into New York or Boston.

Something of this distinction we can trace in the later Roman notions about the Druids. Rumours of them coming from the distant wilderness, and the rude tribes among whom they ministered, give the orator or the poet available material for the picturesque; but when he comes within the pale of Roman civilisation, the Druid is only to be got rid of.

One of the latest of the writers of the old world who alludes to the Druids is Ausonius the poet; though he lived in the fourth century, he is still treated as one of the minor classics. He was a citizen of Bordeaux, and of this his readers are kept in continual remembrance, as the greater portion of his poetry turns on local scenes and events, or commemorates his relations and the fellow-citizens to whom he was attached. He refers to two of these as descended from the Druids, whom he speaks of as a class or race who had charge of the mysteries connected with the worship of Apollo. This notion, if dependence could be placed on it, would contradict Cæsar, who expressly describes them as individually elected to office. But Ausonius, living in a part of Gaul which had for centuries been a civilised province of the Empire, probably knew or cared little about them, and spoke of them as beings of the far past or of some distant territory, with whom his friends were connected by descent. These were among the "professores" of Bordeaux — personally civilised men of the Empire, whatever their ancestry or antecedents may have been; and the poet passes his good-humoured allusion to them much as one might suppose an Englishman rallying his brother professor on his descent from a second-sighted Highlandman, or a prophetic bard of Wales.[1]

Such is an attempt to convey an impression of what the Druids were in the eye of the intelligent inhabitants of the Empire, so far as materials exist for such

[1] "Tu Bajocassis stirpe Druidarum satus
Si fama non fallit fidem
Beleni sacratum ducis e Templo genus;
Et inde vobis nomena
Tibi Pateræ: sic ministros nuncupant
Apollinaris mystici."—Prof., iv.

an estimate.[1] Both their character and their scantiness point to the indifference and haughty carelessness of those who were at the trouble even to allude to such a matter as Druidism;—unless it in any way affected the success of the Roman arms, or interfered with the municipal organisation of the Empire, Druidism might have its own way unmolested and unnoticed.

The polytheists and sceptics of Rome had no commission to make spiritual war on it, to save human souls from the perdition it might bring them to; so that it is possible, for all the casual indifference with which it was treated, that the institution may have been as extensive as its later votaries have asserted that it was. Wherever a religion is polytheist, its outlines are apt not to be sharply defined from those of other creeds, especially other polytheisms. We have seen how readily the fragmentary hints about the religion of the Gauls were realised to the Roman in the attributes of Mercury and Apollo. The Romans were liberal in receiving the deities of their neighbours, slightly readjusting them in externals to suit the Roman fashion. It has been observed that many of the altars found in Britain are dedicated to deities not known in the Pantheon, and believed to be of local acceptance in Britain. Among these are Vitres or Veteres, the goddess Hamia, the transmarine mothers, and the three Lamii, who seem to have been propitiated as beings of evil omen—vampires or fates. A like aptitude for amalgamation has often been a sorely perplexing problem to the Christian missionary, who finds his heathen auditors offering ami-

[1] In an article in the Edinburgh Review for July 1863, the Author had an opportunity of more amply commenting on the amount of authority for the existence of the Druids.

cable compromises, and ready to take in so much of his Christianity as they can adapt to their own system without materially disorganising it.

From the beginning, the teacher of the Unity of the Deity and the doctrine of the Atonement could take nothing from the polytheist. Thus between Christianity and all other systems of belief there was a distinct outline. Between the details of Druidism and those of the new faith there could be no mixture, as there might have been between one heathen creed and another. Hence, when the Christian missionaries met the Druids face to face as a great hierarchy, their leading specialties would be noticed, and in the lives of these early missionaries we would hear of the Archdruids and their Suffragans—of the white robes, the golden sickles, the mistletoe, the Pythagorean mysteries, the serpents' egg, the sacrifices on the cromlechs, the worship and ceremonies within the great stone circles—all the specialties of creed and ceremonial, in fact, with which imagination has endowed the Druids of recent literature. The contest of conversion lasted from the days of Constantine the Great to long after the days of Charlemagne. The larger features of the contest are told by the ecclesiastical historians; the individual triumphs of the missionaries are to be found in the ample volumes of the Lives of the Saints. If, then, there had been in existence a heathen hierarchy holding spiritual rule over the greater part of Europe, to find nothing about it in the annals of the early Church would be as anomalous as to read a history of the Reformation which says nothing of the Popedom, the Romish hierarchy, and the Council of Trent. Yet on Druidism, its hierarchy and creed, these annals of the

early Church are dumb. It has yet to be discovered that they speak of heathendom as represented by any general hierarchy or system. The forces of the enemy appear ever to be scattered and isolated. A local idol, the temple in which it is preserved, and a heathen priest or Magus taking charge of the temple,—such are usually the nature of the impediment with which the early saint has to deal when he penetrates the territories of the unconverted.

Some of the contests between the Missionaries and the Magi come home to Scottish ground. They are rather too apt to follow the precedent of the celebrated competition in the presence of Pharaoh. Thus when the King of Strathclyde suffers by an inundation, which St Kentigern claims as his doing, the king holds it as of no more account than the tricks played on him by the Magi, and is not brought to reason until the saint far excels these unsanctified adepts. We have some notices of the Magi in the Lives of St Columba, and as this narrative dates nearer to the time it deals with than the others, the notices are by so much the more valuable.

We find that the Magi he had to deal with had great power over winds and waves, and had an influence on places endowed with maleficent or beneficent qualities. They were men of consequence, for we find one of them the influential companion, the tutor, adviser, or minister of the great King Brud. We are told how Columba, speaking through an interpreter, converted the family of a certain plebeian in Pictland; how, soon afterwards, one of the children fell sick, and the Magi came about him, calling on the father to appeal to the old gods as more powerful than the one new God.

The child died, and Columba came to the rescue of his faith, and performed one of his established miracles.[1]

It has been usual to praise the sagacity of the ancient missionary saints in clustering the sanctity of the new worship round the pagan altars, and outbidding, as it were, the influence of the old deities, instead of immediately repudiating their divinity. It would be interesting had we more evidence for this practice than we have. It is said to have left its vestiges in the partly heathen ceremonies practised down to late times in the spots sanctified by the first missionaries, and especially around the numberless fountains which bear traditionally the distinction of having received consecration at their hands. Wherever there was any such object endowed by the pagan priesthood with miraculous gifts, either of good or evil, it of course behoved the Christian missionary to prove upon it the superior power of his own Master; and this could be shown in the beauty and glory of beneficence, by imparting the powers of blessing or of healing to that which, under the maleficent influence of paganism, was endowed only with a capacity for cursing or injuring. We are told that there was a well in Pictland worshipped as a malignant deity, because whoever touched its waters became lame or leprous, or lost an eye, or suffered some other bodily calamity. Here was an opportunity for St Columba and his followers. As they approached, the Magi rejoiced in the calamities which the intruders were determined to bring upon themselves. Having invoked a blessing on the fountain, he and his companions washed their hands and feet, and then drank of the water. Whether with any significant intention

[1] Adamnan, ii. 32.

or not, such is the order in which the external and internal applications are related. The Magi were put to shame, and their hideous well was enrolled in the catalogue of blessed fountains, which included one stricken by the saint from the dry rock, after the manner of Moses in the wilderness.[1] It may be gathered from other sources that a considerable portion of that pagan magic influence which it was desirable to supersede resided in fountains, but at the same time the first ceremony of conversion being the rite of baptism is sufficient in itself to account for the extensive consecration of fountains.

We are introduced through St Columba in some measure to the private life of one Magus who exercised an influence at the court of King Brud. His name was Broichan, a word which seems to have been nearly useless to the etymologists. He had in his possession a female slave, an Irishwoman, and it must be supposed a Christian. Columba took such a keen interest in the woman's fate as we may often suppose experienced in later times, when a European lady has been known to be in the hands of a Barbary pirate. He went to Brud's court on the banks of the Ness; but though the monarch was civil he would not interfere, and Broichan was inexorable, so that the saint must have recourse to a formidable miracle to obtain the woman's release. He threatened that if she were not released before he himself returned, Broichan would die. Columba walked down to the river Ness, and taking thence a white stone, he told his disciples to expect a sudden message from the palace. The message came: Broichan had been suddenly seized with the predicted illness. As he was lifting his drink to his lips, an angel came and smashed

[1] Adamnan, ii. 10, 11.

the vessel—it is called a glass vessel, by the way—and struck the Magus with deadly sickness. Columba sent two of his disciples with a message, that the Magus must die unless the slave were released. She was released, and Broichan was permitted to recover by drinking the water in which the white pebble taken from the Ness had been dipped.[1]

It might be thought that Broichan would attempt no further trials of strength after his escape, but he was again tempted, to his confusion. He asked Columba when he was going to leave the Pictish court. Columba told him the day he had fixed for his departure with his disciples. Broichan said they should not go that day, for he would exercise his power of raising contrary winds and bringing down dark mists. In the face of a contrary wind, and shrouded by dark mists, the little band embarked on Loch Ness; but as they proceeded the mist arose, and the wind changed and wafted them on with propitious gales.[2]

In the telling of these things there is a certain placidity alien from the horror and contempt with which the biographer of a Christian saint might be expected to treat them. On the other hand, it is observable that we have no record of these Magi combining—as a great organised priesthood certainly would—to put down the intruders by persecution. Britain's share in the imperial persecutions of the Christians has been told, whether accurately or not. There are instances, too, of the slaughter of missionaries by the barbarous people; but there does not appear to have been anything that could be counted ecclesiastical persecution led on by the priests of the heathens.

[1] Adamnan, ii. 33.

[2] Ibid., 34.

The unlucky destiny of "the Pictish question" pursues it through these meagre notices of heathenism in Pictland. They are not distinct enough to be assigned either as Celtic or as Teutonic forms of superstition. The influence of the magus over the deities that have the elements in charge might belong to the Norse mythology, but is not distinct enough to be absolutely assigned to that source. Without a great stretch of imagination, some of the deities assumed by the Romans in Britain might be identified in the Norse mythology—the three Lamii, for instance, might be the terrible Norns who held the issues of life and death; but here, again, there is nothing to support a distinct conclusion.[1]

Whether as Picts, Saxons, or by any other name, however, we know that Scotland was inhabited by men of the Norsē race, who brought with them the Scandinavian mythology—the religion of the Eddas—retaining it until they were converted to Christianity. Even without the vestiges that can be so easily found in our language, literature, and customs, it is one of the things that may be pronounced as historically certain, that these Northmen, while retaining their language as a separate people, would retain also their religion until it yielded to the influence of Christianity. It was not a fetishism depending on the existence or presence of the thing worshipped. It had no local hold upon any sacred spots or objects, such as a sacred city or a sacred

[1] "Vitres, or Viteres, or Veteres, is a god whose name is confined to the north of Britain. Hodgson remarks that Vithris was a name of Odin, as we find in the death-song of Lodbroc, 'I will approach the court of Vithris with the faltering voice of fear.' If Veteres and the Scandinavian Odin be identical, we are thus furnished with evidence of the early settlement of the Teutonic tribes in England."—Bruce's Roman Wall, 399.

mountain, conferring vividness and reality to the worship, and acting on the beholder through a materiality that would render the influence of his religion feebler and feebler the farther the emigrant wandered away. It was a universal system, with its several invisible worlds for all its parts, and had no other local hold upon the votary, save that it was formed for the cold and stormy north—and these conditions would scarcely desert it in Scotland.

Besides fainter relics, the names most used among us of all names—those of the days of the week—come from the Norse gods. Wednesday is Woden's day, named after Oden, the great father of the Aser, or deities of Asgard. Thursday is from Thor, a word which means thunder, and was the name of the thundering god. By the Germans it is called Donnerstag, Donner being German for thunder. Friday is so called after Freya, the wife of Odin and the mother of Thor and Balder. Tuesday comes from Tau or Tue. In the Eddas he is a deity of minor renown; but he may have been popular among the Angles or Saxons, for different districts had their favourites among the Aser. Thor, for instance, is generally the greatest of all, taking precedence over his father Odin, as Jupiter did over old Saturn; but in England Odin was advanced to the head. Saturday, the name given to the old Jewish Sabbath, is popularly supposed to take its name from Saturn; but it is much more natural to derive it from Saetere, a Norse deity popular among the Saxons, whose similarity in name to the classic father of the gods is probably accidental.[1]

Besides these we have in Scotland a special annual

[1] Kemble's Saxons in England, i. 372.

reminiscence of Norse names and customs in the Yule or mid-winter festival, called in England Christmas, and in France Noel. The word is a mere form of the Norse Joel, applied to the darkest days of the year, when the controller of the seasons stopped in the career of advance in cold and darkness, gradually to restore to the earth the giver of light and fruitfulness.[1] It was a time of fearful revelry both among gods and men, and the degenerate races of our own day have done their best to show reverence for the venerable institution.

We cannot complain of this religion, or the deities by whom it was administered, being vague and difficult to realise, like the Druidism, or whatever else the Celtic tribes may have had for their religion. The cosmogony and pantheon of the Eddas are preserved with fulness and minuteness. There is no room here to give them at length, and an abridgment of them would be dry and useless. At the same time their peculiarities are very broad and distinctive, and a passing glance at these affords us strong characteristics of the people by whom such a religion was imagined.

The Norse cosmogony, or history of the creation of the existing world seen and inhabited, as well as the other worlds provided for glory and happiness, or for degradation and misery, was extremely complicated. Not being restrained by the laws of the Copernican system, or compelled to treat the earth as a round ball, the inventors of the system created what they wanted —a world of ice here and of fire there, chaoses, seas,

[1] "Jola-aptan M vesper Festi Jolensis; *Dan.* jul.; *Pict. Scot. et vet. Angl.* Yule; *Gall.* Noel; *A.S.* Geol, Geohol Iule (*unde menses Januarius et Februarius* Giuli *dicti fuerunt*); *Finn.* Ioulu; *Ssr.*, Holi, Houli Saturnalia Indorum recentiorum."—Glossarium in Partem Historicam Eddæ Saemundinæ.

abysses, regions of gloom, and sunny fruitful places of happiness, at discretion. The Hell of the system was a peculiar creation, very eloquent of its northern origin. It does not exactly correspond with our hell as the receptacle of the damned, though it is a place disliked and dreaded as the abode of oblivion, where those who have not by great deeds earned a better fate are absolutely locked up, and detained by strong gates. The character of this place is in harmony with the common story, of the Danish missionary Hans Egede, when he preached to the Greenlanders, requiring to abandon the usual definitions of the place of torment, and describe it as a region of eternal frost. An accomplished Norse scholar thus tells us how "the realm of Hel was all that Wælheal was not—cold, cheerless, shadowy; no stimulated war was *there*, from which the combatants desisted with renovated strength and glory; no capacious quaighs of mead or cups of the life-giving wine; no feast continually enjoyed and miraculously reproduced; no songs nor narratives of noble deeds; no expectation of the last great battle, when the *einherjar* were to accompany Allfather to meet his gigantic antagonists; no flashing Shieldmays animating the brave with their discourse, and lightening the hall with their splendour: but chill and ice-frost and darkness; shadowy realms without a sun, without song, or wine, or feast, or the soul-inspiring company of heroes glorying in the great deeds of their worldly life."[1] Valhalla is the reverse of all this. It glitters with gold, and the shields and spears of the countless heroes received into it by its forty gates, which admit eight hundred guests at once. Here there is eternal revel which knows no satiety or

[1] Kemble's Saxons in England, i. 393.

pall, and all the fierce joys which the warrior felt on earth are intensified. It is a world of action still, and here is its attraction to those to whom the lazy luxury of the Elysian fields, or the more enervating enjoyments of Oriental paradises, would be no encouragement. It is only, however, for those whom the choosers of the slain promote to happiness. Death on the field was almost a condition of such promotion; and mighty warriors, if they felt death coming on them in another form, would pray to be enclosed in their armour, as a sort of protest that they had worked well for the great object of ambition, a soldier's grave, though the surly fates had denied it to them. To lose all this, and be closed up in a dismal place called hell, it was not necessary that there should be positive misdeed. It was the place for the indolent, the unambitious, and the timid. The mere absence of the high heroism which earned an entrance to Valhalla left no alternative but the other place. For those who had done actual wickedness there was a separate place, called Nastrond, of positive torture by poisonous serpents and other agents of affliction.

There is nothing of the ideal or the spiritual in the Scandinavian mythology. All its creatures are essentially corporeal—large-limbed, strong, and jovial, ravenous eaters, and unassailable either in brain or stomach by the largest conceivable potations. They are supernaturally endowed with all the elements of physical enjoyment. Asceticism is unknown to them. Yet there is nothing in their personal histories of the pruriency that stains the classical mythology, or of the more loathsome sensuality that saturates the Oriental supernatural. Asgard is the model of north-country

domestic life. There is no questionable bachelor like Apollo, no chaste Diana there; but all are man and wife—and conjugal fidelity is so much a matter of course that it is not spoken of as a special virtue. The abode of Balder and his beautiful wife Nana was so hallowed that nothing impure could enter it. Even in the punishment of Loki the mischief-maker, after he had accomplished the inexpiable offence of Balder's death, there occurs a touching picture of a wife's devotion. He was bound to three fragments of rock, and a venomous snake was hung over his head, so that its poison might drop upon his face and torture him. Sigyu his wife watched by him during the long ages, until the Ragnaroek or twilight of the gods should come. Then she held a cup over her husband's head to catch the dripping venom. When it was full, and she had to empty it, the drops falling in the interval tortured him so that his writhings shook all nature and made earthquakes.

Among beings endowed with supernatural strength, and with no profession to be above the influence of human passions, but, on the contrary, partaking of them in a measure proportioned to their strength, it was natural that many harsh and bloody deeds were done. But all were in fair fight, and from their superiority of strength—there was no treachery or subtlety. Evil deeds of this class were left to the order of beings whose province they were. Loki was the mischief-maker among the gods themselves. He answers more to the Mephistopheles of Goethe than to the common Devil of Christendom. He is a cynical, practical joker, who carries his jokes a great deal too far. The beautiful life of Balder, the son of Odin and

Freya and the brother of Thor, seems to have roused a special malignity in him. There was a sort of presentiment that the great ornament of Asgard was too good to be let live, and his mother set about getting everything in nature separately exorcised and pledged not to be the instrument of Balder's death. This was supposed to have been so completely effected, that it was one of the amusements of Asgard to make a target of Balder, and pitch all sorts of deadly weapons against him, to see how they would recoil. Loki, by a diligent search, found a twig that had not been exorcised, owing to its insignificance. To aggravate his offence, he handed it to the brother of Balder, who threw it at him, and so slew him.

Loki confined his tricks to the gods. There were other powers to work evil upon mankind. Chief of these was the Neck, whence comes our Old Nick, and perhaps the Nick Niven, who is a chief among the Scotch witches, holding something like the place that Shakespeare gives to Hecate. Among the most seafaring people in the world, the great bulk of calamities come of shipwreck and other disasters by water; and Neck's operations came to be almost entirely limited to that element. In later times he was in the northern nations a mischievous imp of the stream, like the water-kelpie in Scotland.

The Norns—or Fates, as they are called, to make their nature intelligible—are not properly malignant beings. Their work lies so much, however, in scenes of slaughter, that, naturally enough, they are spoken of with a shudder. They are the choosers of the slain. They watch over battle-fields, and send off the illustrious dead to Valhalla. This is a grand and holy

function; but they are less associated with the splendid mansion to which they promote the heroes than with the bloody horrors in which they find them. Their right of choice or promotion has not been exercised without the suspicion of partiality that accompanies such powers; and somehow the function of choosing the slain becomes mixed up with the power of arranging who are to be slain and who to be spared. As Gray has it in that ode of the Fatal Sisters, which has so thorough a Norse spirit—

> "We the reins to slaughter give,
> Ours to kill and ours to spare."

The nature of these beings is full of material for poetry; but perhaps for that very reason it is thoroughly illogical. They are inferior to the gods; yet they dispose of the gods as absolutely as of human beings. The term Wyrd or Weird comes up along with the Norns. The scholars who have worked on the Eddas seem to have difficulty in fixing its meaning. It seems to be a question with them whether it is the name of the chief of the Norns, or expresses generally that Fate of which they are the mere ministers. In Scotland the word has been long used with almost the same equivocal or double meaning. It has been employed to express the announcement of a prophecy, destiny, or fate, and also to describe the person who can prophesy or pronounce a destiny. Thus, when Wyntoun, the monkish chronicler, of whom we shall have a good deal to say, tells the story of the fatal stone, now in the coronation-chair in Westminister Abbey, and of the prediction that wherever it is, the race of Fergus shall reign, he calls this prediction a

"weird." For the other sense, when Bishop Douglas, in his translation of Virgil, comes on the Parcæ or Fates, he calls them "the Weird Sisters." [1]

It seems an inconsistency that the gods themselves should be at the disposal of these questionable beings; but this is part of the magnanimity and simple grandeur of the character of the mighty Aser. They were not only free from all treachery and cunning, but the use of policy was beneath them; they confided entirely on their absolute strength, or on what is now called brute force. The greatest of them was not ashamed of being befooled by some cleverer power. Indeed, he needed not to disturb himself about such an incident, for his own innate strength was sufficient to protect him from the consequences without recourse to the wisdom of the serpent. There is a memorable instance of this in the sojourn of Thor and his party among the Giants in Utgard. They went in high heart, confident in their strength; but they were doomed to mortification one after another, until their return, when the spell set on them had ceased, and their entertainers were bound to explain the tricks played on them. The first competition was in eating, when the two champions met halfway in the huge trencher set between them; but to the annoyance of the Aser, theirs had not picked the bones clean as his opponent had. That opponent, who seemed one of the giants, was in reality a devouring flame. Running was another trial: after three races, Thialfi,

[1] A word coming from a source so solemnly significant, and still in use in Scotland, has naturally had an eventful history, so far as a word can be spoken of. A great deal might be written about it, as one will see at once by reading the quotations from Scotch literature in prose and verse, ranked under the word "weird" in Jamieson's Scottish Dictionary and its supplement.

on whom the Aser's reputation for swiftness was at stake, was obliged to acknowledge himself beaten; and no wonder—he was matched against "Thought." Thor's own first great trial was in drinking—an accomplishment in which he believed himself to be entirely unmatched. A drinking-horn was brought: Thor thought he could empty it at one hearty pull; but no—and indeed, after repeated efforts, he was obliged to leave the horn more than half full. The fact was, that the horn communicated with the sea; and when Thor returned over the earth, he could see that he had drunk the waters over the whole globe, so as to sink their level, raising headlands and numerous sunken islands. In wrestling he barely stood his own in a contest with an old woman—but that old woman was Old Age. And so, although there was mortification for the moment, their achievements in Giantland went far to enhance the mighty reputation of the Aser.

There was one celebrated occasion in which Thor resorted to policy, even to deception; but he did so with excessive reluctance, and the affair was a crisis. One day his red-hot hammer Moelner was missing. It was not only his badge of distinction, but the physical force by which he asserted his dominion. If it were finally lost, heaven and earth would all go wrong —in fact, the possessor of the hammer would supersede the gods. Loki, who had a guess where it was, paid a visit to Giantland, where Thrym, one of its principal inmates, who was sitting on a hill making golden collars for his dogs, coolly told him that he had the hammer buried eight miles deep in Giantland, and would not give it up, except as an equivalent for the hand of Freya, the Queen of Heaven. The emergency

was so terrible that the Aser wished to persuade Freya to consent, or appear to consent; but her matronly modesty and queenly dignity were so shocked that she gave a great snort, celebrated for having shaken Asgard to its foundations. In solemn conclave the Aser recommended, even besought, Thor to personate Freya and go to Utgard. He long resisted the humiliating alternative, but the public interests prevailed, and, arrayed in the head-dress and other magnificent robes of the queen, and veiled as a bride of Heaven, he set off for Giantland, accompanied by the Machiavelian Loki, who had not yet lost himself by his great offence. The giants were rather astonished by a glimpse they got of the bride's fierce eyes, and still more at her fine appetite, when she ate an ox, eight salmon, and no end of sweetmeats, the disappearance of which was a mortification to the bridesmaids. At length the red-hot hammer was brought in on a truss borne by four giants. Thor seized it, and laid about him, crashing skulls to the right and the left. He was now himself again, and master of his Thunder. It is observable that even in this instance the moral of the Eddas, that sheer strength is everything, and policy unworthy of the gods, is not entirely abandoned. It is when deprived of his proper element of physical force, and consequently enervated, and in a manner demoralised, that the great Thor has recourse to policy.

Even from these small glimpses one may see how thoroughly the Eddas are filled and animated by the spirit of the northern people. Throughout there is ever-striving energy, determination of purpose, the physical power seconding the unbending will, a cour-

age that is manifest not only in contempt of death, but in patient endurance of suffering, a distaste of all politic devices and diplomatic intrigues, and a reliance on honest strength to carry out the mighty designs of a never-resting ambition. There are no applications of gentleness and mercy, but there is a strong sense of justice and an aversion to wanton cruelty. There is no pretence of abjuring the good gifts of nature, and shrivelling into impotent asceticism; on the contrary, there is mighty feasting and revelling when the bow is unbent and the sword sheathed, but there is honest domestic faith and fidelity withal. Such are the qualities set to struggle with the ice, the storms, and the arid soil of the northern land; and all these difficulties are conquered so effectually that their conquerors abide in affluence and splendour.

Yet the propensity to hunt forth analogies, and make a display of learning and ingenuity, has not overlooked this stormy region; and we are taught to connect its thoroughly northern legends with the voluptuous aspirations of the Oriental nations and the polished ideality of the Greeks. It does not strengthen the distinctive features of Balder's history to derive it from the Syrian myth of Thammuz and Adonis, or to compare him with the Persian hero Ispandier. It profits little that one compares Asgard to Olympus, seeing that there is another ready to identify it with Troy, and a third is prepared to prove that the whole is a phase of Buddhism. The Olympian comparison has, however, unfortunately taken a hold, Odin being Mercury; Thor, Jupiter; and Freya, Venus: and this has been stamped by the highest authority, in our country at least, the usage of Parliament, in the votes

and proceedings of which Wednesday is *dies Mercurii*, Thursday *dies Jovis*, and Friday *dies Veneris*. But there are protesters against even this, who find that Thor and Odin came from a still remoter distance, being in reality the Vishnu and Siva of Hindostan; and again others, who find the system of the Eddas in the Persian Zend Avesta. Besides their being so conformable to the spirit of the people and the place, the northern nations laid a stronger hold upon the Sagas as peculiarly their own, for the tribes and great families professed to be descended of the frequenters of Asgard. They brought this proud pedigree with them in their wanderings; and when the chronicles supplied a leader for the Saxons in Britain, calling him Hengest, they likewise provided for him an Asgard pedigree, making him sixth in descent from Odin.

It is fortunate that in the abundance of old Norse literature we have the Scandinavian mythology in its original heathen purity, uncontaminated by either philosophical or doctrinal gloss.[1] This is of all the

[1] There are many minor sources of information on the Scandinavian mythology, but the great storehouse is in the Elder Edda, printed at Copenhagen in three quarto volumes, and issued at long intervals. The first was published in 1788, with the title "Edda Rhythmica seu Antiquior vulgo Sæmundina dicta; Pars I. Odas Mythologicas a Resenio non editas continens." The second came in 1818, edited by Thorkelin, and the third in 1828, edited by Fin Magnusen. Very necessary for most English readers, the Norse text is attended by a verbatim Latin translation, and to each volume there is an explanatory index or glossary, which is virtually an encyclopedia of Scandinavian mythology. The preservation of the fundamental treasures of this great work is owing to a fortunate incident of a kind not common in literary history. In the tenth century, when powerful kings set up in Scandinavia, Harald Harfager and Gorm the Old, many of the landed proprietors or nobles, who could not bear their aggrandising rule, and would not have the Christian religion forced on them, swarmed off into distant countries. True to the characteristics of their race, they preferred even a residence in

greater moment that many of the old Norse superstitions lingered in Scotland long after the established ascendancy of Christianity. They were the object of uninterrupted reprobation, first by the Romish, and next by the Reformation clergy. The General Assembly had to denounce them even in the eighteenth century, and they call many lamentations from the clergymen who compiled the two Statistical Accounts of Scotland. They have prevailed chiefly among the Celtic-speaking Highlanders. Many of these, as we have seen, were of Gothic origin. There has already been allusion to a moral phenomenon, often very provoking to missionaries, exemplified in races who are quite ready to accept the articles, especially the more

barren Iceland to submission, and many of them settled there in the manner so picturesquely described in the story of Burnt Njal. Christianity followed them, and they took to it heartily when it was left to their own free will. It happened that while it was yet time a certain Saemond thought of collecting the heathen Sagas. He was born in the middle of the twelfth century, when Christianity had been in existence about fifty years, and the traditions of the old religion were still pretty distinct. It is thus in Saemond's, or the Elder Edda, that we possess the freshest and least corrupted record of the Scandivanian mythology.

In the path of such things reaching us in their original purity there are many dangers. The worst of all is when they pass through the hands of the sensible historians, who think they can see the truth at the bottom of the supernatural, and profess to give us it. In Saxo Grammaticus, and other writers of the class, the story of Balder for instance, stripped of its supernatural apparatus, fits well enough in as an episode of real history. Such attempts are useless and very mischievous. Given a story full of exaggeration and of the supernatural, though it may all be based on a real and sober foundation—given no assistance but from itself—the human being has not yet appeared who possesses the analytic power of decomposing it so as to separate truth from falsehood, and the task has to be abandoned.

Another danger run by the Sagas was, that their deities became very convenient to serve as fiends and evil demons to the ecclesiastical writers. Though dethroned as gods, they were treated as still at work counteracting the beneficent influence of Christianity, and when drawn in this spirit the portraits made of them were apt to be inaccurate.

picturesque ones, of the new religion offered to them as a pleasant addition to the creed, or perhaps conglomerate of creeds, they already enjoy. The Highlanders are especially susceptible to the impression of the supernatural, and it can quite easily be believed that, once receiving a portion of the Norse heathen superstitions, they might retain them after all belief in them had long departed from the descendants of the old believers in the mythology of the Sagas.

CHAPTER VII.

Early Christianity.

ST KENTIGERN AND HIS MISSION IN STRATHCLYDE—NO ASSISTANCE FROM RELICS OF ROMAN CHRISTIANITY—DEALINGS WITH THE KING—ST PALADIUS—LARGER POSITION IN HISTORY OF ST COLUMBA—CHURCH OF THE IRISH AND ALBANIAN SCOTS—INDEPENDENT OF ROME—SPECIALTIES SEPARATING FROM THE REST OF THE CATHOLIC WORLD—ITS MONASTICISM—POSITION AND FUNCTIONS OF WOMEN—TENDENCY OF LATER ECCLESIASTICAL LITERATURE TO SUPPRESS THESE SPECIALTIES—IMPORTANCE OF THE EARLIER SOURCES—PERSONAL HISTORY OF ST COLUMBA—HIS ROYAL RANK—DISTRIBUTION OF POLITICAL AND ECCLESIASTICAL POWER AMONG RULING DYNASTIES—HIS POLITICAL DIFFICULTIES—HIS MISSION—ESTABLISHMENT AT IONA—THE ARCHITECTURE OF HIS MONASTERY—RELICS OF ECCLESIASTICAL ARCHITECTURE SEPARATE FROM THE ROMAN TYPE—GOVERNMENT—POSITION OF BISHOPS—ABSOLUTENESS OF MONASTIC RULE—ABSTINENCE—INDEPENDENCE OF THE ROMISH HIERARCHY.

We have seen how far there remains historical evidence that the Romans established Christianity in Scotland. We have also seen that in the legends adopted at a later period in history, the Romanised Christians had serving among them an apostle or bishop called St Ninian, and the prevalent belief that the Christian community of Scotland under Roman dominion supplied to Ireland her great missionary, St Pat-

rick. However it was before the departure of the Romans, it is certain that they did not leave in Scotland a Christianity of sufficient vitality to maintain itself through the troubles that followed. Part of the Roman province was not permanently attached to the Christian Church until it was penetrated by Christianity from the Saxon side, and brought into the fold of the successors of St Cuthbert. Earlier than his day, however, Christianity was taught in the west. In the kingdom or district of Strathclyde, supposed to contain within it part of the old Roman province, St Kentigern, otherwise known as St Mungo, was received as the local apostle. His death is laid in the year 601, so that he belonged to the latter part of the sixth century. He was thus a contemporary of Columba, who paid a memorable visit to him in his district or "diocese," as the later ecclesiastical writers call it. They exchanged crosiers, and we are told that Columba's, doubly blessed in the sanctity of the giver and the receiver, was seen in the fifteenth century in the Reliquary at Rippon in a precious jewelled shrine.[1] His life was written by Jocelyn of Furness; but as this is a work of the twelfth century, it does not give us through the usual fables those close glimpses of ecclesiastical customs and domestic life which we shall meet with in the History of Columba by Adamnan, who lived about five centuries earlier. Jocelyn's book is all hard miracle-working of the conventional kind, accompanied by a deal of bickering with the secular power, in which the saint, by virtue of his supernatural support, is always victorious. The writer had to do his duty to the ecclesiastical polity of his day, when the Romish hier-

[1] Scotichron, iii. 30; Reeves's St Columba, 324.

archy was firmly established, and the biographer of a saint had a sort of formula for the method in which he was to do his work.

The armorial bearings of the city of Glasgow perpetuate three renowned miracles wrought by St Kentigern. On a shield argent a bird proper represents a pet rubisca, or robin redbreast, which belonged to the renowned St Serf when he kept an academy of young neophytes. Among these the bird, whether from mischief or accident, was torn to pieces. On the approach of the saint with his avenging rod they threw the fragments, and with them the blame of the deed, in the lap of young Kentigern, the best boy among them. His latent sanctity was immediately acknowledged by the creature gathering up his limbs, flapping his wings, and singing a song of welcome on the approach of his sacred master. A tree or branch forming the crest commemorates an occasion when Kentigern's enemies had extinguished his fire, and he had to bring a tree from the frozen forest and breathe into it the breath of fire. A fish in base, with a ring in its mouth, is connected with one of the established miracles of the hagiologists,—the finding of a ring, which has been cast away, in the body of a fish, just when some critical result may be effected by its possession.

If there is any light to be derived from this work, it is to confirm the belief that the Romanised Britons north of the Solway, if they had ever been Christianised, had lapsed into heathenism. In the special territory of St Ninian it might be expected that there was little for a missionary to accomplish, but it seems, from the king's court downwards, to have been all fresh heathen ground to Kentigern. He had a renowned controversy

with King Morken, to whom he applied for temporalities for the becoming support of himself and his priestly followers. Morken's answer did credit to his power of sarcastic retort, whatever may be said for its seemliness. "Was it not a pet precept of the saint, 'Cast thy care upon the Lord, and He will care for thee'?[1] Now," continued the king, "here am I, who have no faith in such precepts, who do not seek the kingdom of God and His righteousness; yet, for all that, are not riches and honours heaped upon me?" What would the saint have?—practice proved his doctrine to be naught. In vain the saint pleaded that it was part of the inscrutable policy of the Almighty to afflict good and holy people with the wants of the flesh, and heap the world's wealth on the ungodly—it was to both a trial, giving an opportunity for acts of beneficence and self-sacrifice. The prince would by no means see the logic of this, and told the saint to have done with words and come to deeds. There were the royal granaries full of produce, and there were the Christian priests starving. There would be something to believe in if the God in whom they trusted would bodily transfer these good things into their hands. The saint retired into his oratory and prayed. In the intensity of his sufferings he began to weep, and then, behold, as the tears filled and flowed from his eyes, so began the waters of the Clyde to swell into a mighty flood. It overflowed the banks where the royal granaries were, and, carrying them down the stream, deposited the whole at the saint's very door, beside the Mellingdevor or the Molindinar stream, which flows through Glasgow to join the

[1] "Jacta curam tuam in Domino, et ipse te enutriret."—Vita Kentigerni, c. 21.

Clyde. It is characteristic of the difficulties these missionaries had to deal with, that this blow from his own weapons did not silence the king. It was just such a thing as the magicians would attempt, and he threatened the saint with such consequences as a modern justice of peace metes out to a vagrant fortune-teller. While he was in this mood, the saint, founding too rashly on his triumph, came to the palace to continue the argument. Driven beyond the last stage of his patience, the king kicked him. The measure of iniquity was now fulfilled, and it was necessary to assert the divine authority by a heavy bodily affliction, which fell not only on the king but his chief adviser Cathen, who, though he worked in secret, was known by the saint to have taken a mischievous delight in prompting the unhappy king throughout the whole affair.[1] Out of such a story we may perhaps safely take as much as tells us what, according to the writings and traditions of the Church in the twelfth century, was the position it held in Strathclyde in the sixth. Further than this, although Jocelyn tells us that he had the use of old Lives of Kentigern, his book is not a very safe guide. He calls Kentigern "a bishop," because in the days of Jocelyn no one could be supposed to teach the Word who was not a bishop, or under episcopal authority. But it was impossible, in telling the facts of so isolated a life, to find that he had been advanced to the order in the legitimate fashion by the laying on of the hands of three other bishops. Jocelyn therefore tells us that a bishop was sent over from Ireland to consecrate him, according to the custom of the Scots and British Churches of that time; and this story of his having

[1] Vita Kentigerni, cap. 21, 22.

been consecrated by a single bishop is often referred to by punctilious churchmen as a great ecclesiastical scandal. Jocelyn goes on to tell how, in a sort of despair, Kentigern left Strathclyde to do duty among the Southern Britons in Wales. There afterwards, however, occupied the throne of Strathclyde, Rederech, a pious monarch, eager to restore the Gospel to his benighted subjects, and at his desire Kentigern returned. The narrative that follows shews us less of the religious condition of Strathclyde in the sixth century than of the contemporary of Becket doing his duty to his order. The king, stripping himself of his royal robes, fell upon his knees before the bishop, doing him homage, and admitting his superior authority, even as Constantine the Great had admitted the superior authority of Pope Silvester; whence, says the satisfied biographer, it became the custom in that kingdom, while it remained separate, that the prince was subject to the bishop.[1]

There are still some other hints of early Christian ministration in Scotland, which may be briefly looked at before we come to the history of the mission which was destined to lay the solid foundation of Christianity in the country.

In the Chronicle of Prosper of Aquitaine, a work attributed to the fifth century, and esteemed as a high authority about the early Christian Church, there is a

[1] Vita, c. 33. This Rederech's existence, and his high esteem in the Christian world, are attested in Adamnan's Life of Columba, where there is a chapter (15), "De Rege Roderco filio Tothail, qui in Petra Cloithe regnavit, beati viri prophetia." Petra Cloithe is Dumbarton. The prophecy was given in answer to the anxious inquiry of an ambassador or messenger sent to ask some prophetic light concerning indistinct announcements that this king was to die a violent death. The answer was, that, on the contrary, he was to die in his own house "super plumatiunculam," which is interpreted his bed.

short passage which has caused volumes of controversy. It states how in the year 431 Palladius was consecrated by Pope Celestine, and sent to the Scots believing in Christ as their first bishop. He is not to be confounded with the celebrated Palladius of Helenopolis. Beside him, indeed, in contemporary literature, the bishop of the Scots was an obscure man, though controversy in later times has made him renowned by the frequent echo of his name. Naturally enough, the Scots to whom he was sent were supposed to be the natives of existing Scotland. After a stormy contest, Ireland succeeded, for reasons sufficiently obvious, in claiming him to herself, but the acquisition does not appear to have been in all things fortunate. He was sent to the Scots believing in Christ, whence it had to be inferred that they were already converted, and he was their first bishop. Here was a clear invasion of the two distinctions of St Patrick—that he was the converter of the Irish, and their earliest prelate. Nor could it work out any satisfactory extrication of the difficulty, that, in comparing the writers about the early Church in Ireland, the acts of St Patrick and those of St Palladius were found to be so inextricably mixed up with each other, that some writers have only found relief from the confusion by supposing that Palladius and Patrick were one and the same.

So far is clear, that if there was a Palladius in the British Isles, Ireland was the place of his original sojourn. But writers of a later date than Prosper of Aquitaine, though not so late as the period when the name of Scot was transferred to North Britain, bring him over from Ireland to Scotland. The legend they record is, that he was on his way to Rome, but

being tossed by storms and driven out of his course, he was at last wrecked on the north-east coast of Scotland. There he remained ministering until his death, making some converts and founding the church of Fordun, in Kincardineshire. Scotland having thus a sort of alternate hold on Palladius, made the one strengthen the other. He became one of the most conspicuous of the national saints, and was commemorated and honoured accordingly in the services of the Church.[1]

Some holy men, reputed to have been colleagues or disciples of Palladius, are naturally still more indistinctly recorded in any writing so old as to be trusted, yet some of these have a stronger hold on tradition and topographical commemoration than he had. There is, for instance, St Ternan, who gives his name to the parish of Banchory-Ternan, near Aberdeen. St Serf was commemorated in the Monastery of St Serf, on an island in Loch Leven, where Wyntoun wrote his Chronicle of Scotland. This saint had a reputation for the neatness and appropriateness of his miracles—as, for instance, where a rough fellow was charged with stealing and devouring a lamb, and denied the charge, the saint made the animal bleat forth the tale of its wrongs from the guilty stomach of the thief.

[1] His day was the 6th of July, and under this he will be found commemorated in the Breviarium Aberdonense, where he is said to have died at Longforgan, in Perthshire. Nennius seems to be the earliest writer to tell the story of his shipwreck and the spending of his latter days in Scotland. In one instance, at least, it is acknowledged by an Irish authority of considerable but not accurately ascertained antiquity, the ancient Scholia, or comments on the Lives of St Patrick, rendered by Colgan from Irish into Latin; and in these the name of Fordun twice occurs—"Coactus circuire oras Hiberniæ versus aquilonem, donec tandem tempestate magno pulsus, venerit at extremam partem Modhaidth versus austrum, ubi fundavit ecclesiam Fordun; et Pledi est nomen ejus ibi."—Trias Thaumaturga, Prima Vita; Scholia Veteris Scholiastæ, 13 n.

These are but casual and indecisive notices of Christian missions and other services in Scotland. It is convenient to clear them off before we come to the history of the Christianising of Scotland through the memorable mission headed by St Columba. The character and influence of this mission will perhaps be best understood by considering them in their relation to the ecclesiastical conditions of the place whence the mission came.

However it was that the faith reached Ireland—whether it was by St Patrick alone, or by any number of refugees from Christian Europe—it found there a genial soil, where it rapidly took root and flourished. The Christian community that so arose was different from all others, with a very significant difference. In those others the secular power of Rome had asserted itself, making the Christian religion law, but not always obtaining for it the hearty acceptance of the people. Here in Ireland the sword had not penetrated, but the Gospel was received with special enthusiasm. It was where the Roman arms had dominated, and created wealth and civilisation, that the reactionary tide of the unconquered heathen nations broke in; and thus it was, that when all was war and tumult and the destruction of the elements of civilisation within the bounds of the Roman empire, here, outside that once sacred cordon, the Christian religion and the arts of peace flourished together in security.

Thus isolated, the constitution and customs of the Irish Church were peculiarly its own; and as it became renowned and powerful, these peculiarities exercised a significant influence wherever the Irish Church had an opportunity of acting. Its first leading peculiarity

was its isolation from the Roman system, after that system had grown into consistency and symmetry over the rest of Europe. The early source of the isolation in a separate and independent growth of Christianity was forgotten, or, if remembered, was permitted no weight. The rest of Christendom held the conduct of this community to be the grossest schism, and a rebellion against all sacred authority. In the ecclesiastical histories of later times it was consequently hushed up, or casually mentioned among the corruptions or heresies that had crept into the Church.

The early Irish ecclesiastics, however, took the enmity of the rest of Christendom in a rather defying spirit. Proud of their learning and their influence over their own people, they stood by their standards with sturdy controversy; and even the distinguished men they sent into the heart of the Romish Church itself would sometimes hold by their peculiarities, and were brought to conformity with extreme difficulty. This isolation was productive of historical results standing forth strangely in a country ever so closely associated with the influence of Rome. Even long afterwards, when there came to be a nominal admission of the supremacy, we shall find that the Irish Church was ever counted at headquarters a troublesome self-willed establishment, and every effort was made to bring into it fresh elements from sounder sources of Catholicism. The opportunity for doing this with thorough effect at last came. When Henry II. wanted to annex Ireland, the country was made over to him by the celebrated bull of Adrian IV., who by that one stroke served the Holy See and his own original sovereign—for he was an Englishman. By that bull the English king was instructed to make

known the true Christian faith among the barbarous people, to see to the annual payment of St Peter's pence, and to preserve proper conformity to ecclesiastical rule. This brought at once a body of Anglican priests, who were countenanced in suppressing the old Irish system. There was for some time a good deal of contest, but the priesthood of the original Church dwindled away, and Romanism became supreme under Anglo-Norman protection. The tenor of more recent history has made it difficult for us to realise such a thing, but few historical positions are better attested than this, that the English Saxon was sent to bring the Irish Celt to a sense of his duty to the Holy See of Rome.

Some of the specialties of this Irish Church—the dioceseless bishops, the observance of Easter, and others—are likely to come under our notice in particulars. The leading peculiarity of the Church was, that in its form it was monastic, but with a monasticism strongly mixed up with active secular life. There seems to have been no law or even understood custom of celibacy. Even when competing for the highest honours of asceticism, it does not appear that the monk must have been a bachelor; it was sufficient that he lived an anchorite's life while on trial, separating himself from his family, whether for a time or for ever. Women held great ecclesiastical influence among them. There was in that peculiar Church a functionary or dignitary called the Co-arb. It has been difficult to assign his place, and authors, unable to realise a church where bishops were not supreme, have spoken of the co-arb as the bishop's deputy or his assigned successor. It is clear, however, that the co-arb was a greater person than the bishop, being possessed of temporalities as well as ecclesiastical

power. What bears on the present point is that some of these co-arbs were women.[1]

This Church had in St. Bridget a female saint more powerful than any of Ireland's male saints—even than St Patrick himself. Her influence was so strong in Ireland that it spread itself over all England and Scotland. It may be questioned if any one appearing on earth since the days of the apostles has been so devoutly worshipped. The yearning towards a feminine nature in the conception of the Deity, which took another direction in the ordinary Catholic world, seems here to have concentrated itself on St Bridget, who has been aptly called the Madonna of the Irish. A bishop or two seem

[1] Perhaps the clearest announcement to be found anywhere about these co-arbs is the following passage in Dr Todd's St Patrick, pp. 171, 172:—"On the whole, it appears that the endowments in land, which were granted to the ancient Church by the chieftains who were first converted to Christianity, carried with them the temporal rights and principalities originally belonging to the owners of the soil; and that these rights and principalities were vested, not in bishops as such, but in the co-arbs or ecclesiastical successors of those saints to whom the grants of land were originally made. It is easy to see, therefore, that in the districts where such lands were so granted, a succession of co-arbs would necessarily be kept up. It did not follow that these co-arbs were always bishops, or even priests; in the case of Kildare the co-arbs were always females; and there is an instance on record, although in a different sense, of a female co-arb of St Patrick at Armagh. But it is evident that the abbat or co-arb, and not the bishop as such, inherited the rights of chieftainship and property, and was therefore the important personage in the ecclesiastical community. Hence we have in the annals a nearer approach to a correct list of the abbats and co-arbs than to a correct list of the bishops. The bishop, or bishops, for there were often more than one bishop connected with the monastery, or with what afterwards became the episcopal see, were in subjection to the co-arb abbat, and did not necessarily succeed to each other, according to our modern notions of an episcopal succession. There were frequent breaks in the series. The presence of a pilgrim or travelling bishop, who remained for a time in the monastery, would be enough to supply the wants of the community for that time, by giving the episcopal benedictions; and it was not until he had left them that the monastic 'family' would feel it necessary to provide themselves with another."

to have hung about her court, whether seeking advancement, or as becoming appendages to the establishment of a person so eminent. A legend of one of these, whether there be a word of truth in it or not, is instructive as to the position which she and her Church were understood to hold towards the See of Rome. His name was Condlead; and besides being a bishop he held another function, which has been rendered so as to reconcile it to modern notions by saying that he was St Bridget's artist. This man wanted to go to Rome, whether for artistic or other purposes; but his arbitrary ministress forbade him, under the denunciation that if he went he would be eaten by wolves on the way. The wilful man went, and for his disobedience was eaten by wolves accordingly.[1]

But there sometimes fell to women functions of a totally different character. They had to test the command of the saints over their passions. This points to a specialty in the asceticism of this peculiar Church, as being of a defiant and aggressive temper rather than passive. Physiologists will tell us that in the dry hot climates where ascetic monachism began, fastings and other mortifications have not so much the effect of immediate suffering, as of reducing the physical constitution so as, without immediate danger to life, to render continued abstinence comparatively easy. This negative, indolent asceticism does not appear to have satisfied the Irish notions of probation. It was their glory to court temptation and defy it; and the rank achieved was not merely in proportion to the abstract virtue of the aspirant, but to the strength of the temptations which he had resisted. Hence it happens that some

[1] Todd's St Patrick, 24, 25.

of the writings which do honest justice to such wrestlings with the powers of evil might, from the distinctness with which the temptation and its conquest are described, be confounded with infamous books, cunningly devised for exciting evil passions in the young. Fasting at Iona or Kells is, as every one will admit, a much more serious affair than the same practice in Egypt or Syria; and the infliction was enhanced by the active worldly habits in other respects of those who chose to subject themselves to it. As was the endurance, so was the reward in the acquisition of spiritual power. Great acts of fasting are ever discussed as serious affairs, destined to bear great results. The power of fasting, as a cause capable of producing a definite effect, is curiously exemplified in a little incident in the life of Columba. A saint had been fasting, long and vehemently, for the purpose of getting the better of a perverse monarch with whom he had a quarrel—but it was all in vain; and he found out the reason to be that his enemy had taken to fasting too, and had thus protected himself.

In the history of the branch of this Church which settled itself in Scotland, we shall come across a few more of its specialties.[1]

[1] With all desire to avoid the unseemly practice of fighting the battles of Protestantism in history by carping at the ecclesiastical system of the middle ages, there is one point on which a layman brought up in the principles of the Reformation must take his stand against it, if we would fairly give the history of still earlier Christianity. The ecclesiastical historian of that school was bound to believe that all the complex articulation of the system of which he found himself a part in the thirteenth or fourteenth century had existed from the beginning; the untrammelled student knows that it is the creation of time and design. The ecclesiastic had to obey the Church, and if the Church told him that such things were of old, he must believe accordingly, whatever archæology might say to the contrary. Clergymen are generally disinclined to look back into the origin and early history of their Church, as they are apt, in pursuit of such a task, to find things which they would

Columba was born about the year 520, at Gartan, in the county of Donegal. Both by Fedlhim his father and Ethne his mother he was descended from Irish royal houses, and many of his near relations held rule among the Irish kings. Indeed, it is almost invariably found that the Scoto-Irish saints or churchmen of the period were connected with royal houses, or the families of those potent chiefs who receive from

rather not find. The old priesthood had far stronger restraints from inquiry. They were not only told what to believe, but the complicated framework of their system greatly impeded independent investigation. Each had enough to do with the immediate affairs of his own place. Work was made for him in the significance and importance of what other people count small things. Every posture and motion—every article of costume, first in its colour, second in its structure, thirdly in the time when it was put on or off—symbolised some great truth or mystery of the Church. So did the multiplied ceremonies, small and great; the numerous articles in the ecclesiastical treasury, the specialties of the furniture, and all the peculiarities of the architecture. It would be impossible to classify all the minute and artificial interests thus created to give the ecclesiastic enough to think of in his own little corner of the vast system, and keep his mind from inquiring backwards into the history of it all. Even when a great genius like Mabillon appeared among his brethren, he would utter his knowledge as one afraid to disturb the foundations of a mighty fabric.

The reference of all this to the present point is, that one cannot trust the ecclesiastical historians as correctly rendering events removed to any distance back from their own age. They write about everything as if the Church were constructed—say in the sixth century—exactly on the model to which it has grown in the twelfth century. The St Ninian whose bare existence is hardly proved to the lay archæologist, is with them the head of a completed hierarchy, with dioceses for bishops and parishes for presbyters. Hence the extreme value of authenticated early records, such as Adamnan's Life of St Columba. But even the records professing to be early must be viewed with caution if they come through later transcripts; for it was the duty of the devoted clerk, if he found that the machinery of the Church was imperfectly described, to fill up the deficiency: it was no fraud, but the filling up of an omission, since he knew that every practice of the Church in his own time was only more perfectly fulfilled in its earlier stages.

Dealing merely with the early Irish and Columbate Church, the inquirer gets gradually into the practice of considering it evidence, either

the annalists the title of King. So dynastic, indeed, was ecclesiastical authority in the Western Church, that a genealogical table made out by the Irish antiquaries contains fifteen abbots of Iona, who, including Columba, were all descended from the royal Gulban, head of the Cinell Conaill.[1] Among the Celts of that or even of a far later period there was nothing resembling the strict hereditary succession to temporal dignities and property which the Normans brought to perfection in the feudal system. The path of ambition was open to any member of a royal house. It was evidently a matter of selection according to qualifications and chances whether the ambitious descendant of kings should seek power as a temporal monarch or a spiritual

that a work belongs to a late period, or that it has been tampered with, if he finds in it any of the following specialties :—

1. The term archbishop or bishop, given to every man possessed of high ecclesiastical influence.
2. When a bishop is mentioned, the assignment of a diocese to him.
3. The deification of the Virgin.
4. The invocation of the saints in prayer.
5. (and this will account for some of the others). The acknowledgment of the supremacy of the See of Rome.

The intervention of clergymen not belonging to the old Church has sometimes rather increased than mitigated these difficulties and confusions. The men of the Church of England who have gone back into very early ecclesiastical inquiry, have often shown a rather more active hankering after traditions than even their Romanist brethren, to whom such matters have not the zest of novelty. On the other hand, the way has not by any means been cleared by some zealots, who would place themselves on the opposite side from both. They have striven to make out that Columba was a great Presbyterian light, and that the ecclesiastical polity of Iona was constructed exactly in the form which was devised by the Huguenots of France and Geneva, and brought over to Scotland by their Covenanting followers. It is to the learning and honesty of the new school of Irish archæologists that we owe literally everything we have on so significant a chapter of our history.

[1] 'A Genealogical Table of the early Abbots of Hy, showing their affinity to one another, and their connection with the chief families of Tirconnell, constructed from the Naehmseanchus,' by Dr Reeves.

leader. Each had its attractions,—the latter often affording more real power than the former. Though in Iona he lived as a recluse, holding rule only over his own small community, Columba, when in Ireland, was deeply involved in the state affairs of his day. It was not until the commencement of the ninth century that, in Ireland, the functions of the soldier were made incompatible with the position of the ecclesiastic; and from the manner in which the severance was made, it is clear that these powerful priests of royal origin were often terrible in battle. There is considerable ground for believing that Columba was concerned in three great battles, and that he crossed over to Iona at a time when the power of his enemies rendered it prudent that he should leave Ireland. The cause assigned for one of these—the battle of Coldreim—curiously illustrates the devotion with which transcripts of sacred books—of which, even in that age, there were a few—were valued. Columba had copied St Finnian's "Cathac," or manuscript of the Psalms. A question arising as to the ownership of the copy, King Dermod decided scornfully that "to every cow belongs its calf"—to every book belongs its transcript; and this decision was, as some authorities maintain, the cause of the great battle between the two branches of the Hy Nial.

It was in the year 563 that Columba seriously commenced his mission by sailing for Hy or Iona with twelve disciples. The geographical position of this remote island seems to have been important to his purpose. It had ready communication on either side with the two great races inhabiting Scotland. Towards the south, both on the mainland and the islands, the saint's own countrymen, the Dalriads from Ireland,

were thickly colonising. To the north and east stretched the territories of the Picts, whom it was his mission to convert.

It is not to be understood that any of the ruins, primitive as some of them may appear, which now bring visitors to Iona, were raised by Columba, or for many a generation after his time. The oldest of them, St Oran's Chapel, is in that great transition style between the classic and the Gothic known by the name of Norman, and seems to be no older than the twelfth century. There is some evidence that ecclesiastical buildings were raised in stone so early as the period of Columba in Ireland, and much interest attaches to their reputed remains, because they exhibit no traces of classic origin, as if they had been raised by worshippers who took neither the internal organisation nor the external symbols of their religion from Rome. Among these early and very simple relics a small dome is of frequent occurrence—a dome so small as to be constructed of large stones without a scaffolding, and therefore practicable to builders whose architectural science had not reached the structure of the arch. They are supposed to have been cells or oratories: their size is insufficient to have enclosed any congregation. Of these quaint beehive-shaped edifices the researches of the Irish antiquaries had discovered traces among the Western Isles. The hint thus given has been followed up, and we know of several such vestiges of primitive Christianity scattered through these remote solitudes—buildings which show ambition and skill, yet leave it evident that those who raised them had not attained the knowledge of the structure of the arch from those who took their ecclesiastical discipline

and their architectural skill from Rome.[1] It is noticeable that none of these very early buildings have been found in Iona.

Stone buildings of any kind were, however, the exception. We have already seen that the churches and the houses of their ministers were then generally constructed of wattles, and there is evidence of the use of this material in Iona. It is recorded by the saint's biographer, that having sent some of his disciples to fetch bunches of sticks for constructing the hospitium, they returned with their boat loaded with sticks, but indignant at the plebeians who occupied the ground for complaining of the loss suffered by their removal. Thus the coppice, or plants whatever they were, which supplied the wattles for edifices, appear to have been held in commercial value. The saint made restitution to the grumblers in the shape of six measures of corn-seed, the rapid sprouting and fructification of which are recorded as one of his miracles. It did not infer poverty or sordidness, even for a considerable period afterwards, that sacred edifices were built of wattles. Down to the eighteenth century, the Highland gentleman who could not obtain a castle or fortress would as readily live in "a creel-house" as any other kind of edifice. The method of structure was this:—A wall-plate was made of uprights, with twigs interlaced between them in the usual method of basket-making; the pattern, thus so familiar to the eye, is supposed, as we have seen, to have suggested the basket-work decorations on the ancient sculptured stones.[2]

[1] See Mr Muir's extremely interesting volume, 'Characteristics of Old Church Architecture, &c., in the Mainland and Western Islands of Scotland,' 1861.

[2] See above, p. 162.

A second fabric of the same kind was placed within the other at a short distance, and the space between was filled with turf or clay, forming a pretty solid wall. In numerous spots over Argyleshire and the Western Isles, where sculptured stones and crosses now exist in profusion, but where there are no remains of a stone building, we may presume that the church or other religious house around which they clustered was built of timber or wattles. The church at Iona, as well as the hospitium, the refectory, the kitchen, and a cluster of huts which formed the cells of the brotherhood, appear to have been made with wattles. The church was either of the same material or of wood. Whoever chooses to do so, may infer that the altar was of stone, from a story in the hagiologies, how St Kannechan, kissing it too impetuously, cut his head and lost some blood, which became a valuable relic.[1] The abbot possessed a house or chamber, built, as it appears, of logs, apart from the others, where he maintained the seclusion suited to his position, and was ever attended by messengers ready to communicate with the other departments of the establishment. All the principal buildings were surrounded by a fen or ditch like the smaller fortresses of the day, which were erected on a similar system.

The method of government in the early Church of the West has been a source of much dispute, carried on less for the purpose of finding out what it really was, than of citing it as an example on one side or the other in modern ecclesiastical contests.

One thing is clear, that no bishop held authority in Iona or its dependencies. The monastic dignitaries

[1] Note by Reeves, 357.

held absolute sway. There was no bishop in any way connected with Iona in the days of Columba; but subsequently there were bishops there, who were under the authority of the abbot, and were apparently bound to the same absolute conventual obedience as the other clergy. Bede, in whose days diocesan episcopacy had settled down into the established rule dictated from Rome, distinctly mentions it as a strange exception and irregularity, that in Iona the bishops were subjected to the abbot.[1]

But even in Columba's day bishops were not unknown in Iona, and they appear as persons endowed with peculiar functions and a certain dignity. A bishop seems to have been received in the conventional hierarchy with the same kind of honours of courtesy which we may find shown in one kind of government to an officer of another kind of government; such, for instance, as might be shown in a king's court to a Doge of Venice or a Stadtholder of Holland. There is one instance in the life of Columba of a bishop ordaining a presbyter—an instance which has given rise to volumes of controversy. It is involved in strange incidental peculiarities, which render its reference to any broad principle provokingly equivocal. St Findchan was the superior of a Columbian monastery in the island of Tyree. Here he procured the ordination to the ministry of Black Aida or Aidus, a person of great influence and regal descent, but in his character a man of blood—the murderer of King Dermot, and the perpetrator of many other crimes. Findchan called in a bishop to execute the ceremony, as one calls in a notary to

[1] III. 4.

certify a legal act.[1] Adamnan says the bishop would not have dared to lay his hand on the head of Aida if Findchan had not first laid his own right hand on his head. Columba was very wroth at this occurrence. He prophesied that the hand which Findchan had laid on the son of perdition would rot off, and that the new-made priest would return to his old courses, and die the violent death of him who sheds man's blood; and so, of course, it came to pass. The advocates of primitive episcopacy say that the wickedness of the man shows the potency of a bishop to ordain, and the sending to a distance for the bishop shows how impossible it was to ordain without him. A priest might, it seems, be a bishop without the fact being generally known, as he might hold a degree of Master of Arts, or any other honorary distinction, at the present day, without its necessarily proclaiming itself, and drawing any distinct line between him and other clergymen. We learn this from the prophetic acuteness of Columba, in discovering, by looking in the face of an obscure wandering priest, that he held episcopal rank; wherefore the saint, in virtue of his rank, desired him alone, unassisted by another priest, to break the bread at the altar.[2]

It is evident that, in the Irish ecclesiastical community of that day, the bishops, whatever official rank they may have held, were obscure men in comparison with the monastic dignitaries. Few of the great array of Celtic saints have the title of bishop in the earliest

[1] "Hic itaque idem Aidus, post aliquantum in peregrinatione transactum tempus, accito episcopo, quamvis non recte, apud supradictum Findchanum presbyter ordinatus est."—Adamnan, i. 36.

[2] I. 44.

writings in which they are mentioned. It was mentioned in later ages—for instance, in the eleventh and twelfth centuries—as a scandalous usage among the Irish, that a single bishop often performed the act of consecration, instead of the canonical three—a practice which, to the strict observers of the rules of apostolic descent, should have invalidated the whole hierarchy. It could not arise from any paucity of bishops. Those consecrated by St Patrick alone were counted by hundreds. One of the more moderate of the estimates makes them three hundred and sixty-five—just one for each day in the year. Whether or not we believe all that is said about their multitudinousness, it is beyond doubt that the early Irish bishops were so numerous, and at the same time so obscure, that the most resolute champions of diocesan episcopacy cannot find for them provinces with corporations of presbyters over whom they held diocesan rule. This is in fact just one of the many peculiarities which that primitive Church of the West owed to its severance from Rome. The Saxons of England, receiving their Christianity at the hands of teachers commissioned directly from Rome, received also the Roman notion of a bishop—as an ecclesiastical ruler, whose authority in spiritual things was coextensive with the monarch's in temporal things; and they had a bishop for each kingdom of the heptarchy, instead of the hundreds who frequented Ireland. These, when the Papacy extended its influence to Ireland, were converted into rural deans.

Naturally there is not a word in the great life of St Columba importing that he considered himself in any way under the orders of the Bishop of Rome: that bishop, indeed, does not happen to be mentioned in the

book, though it is discursive and gossipy, speaking of contemporary ecclesiastics and distant states. Twice the city of Rome is mentioned—on one occasion to lament that pestilence was rife there, and on another to proclaim that the fame of St Columba had spread over Britain, Gaul, and Spain, and had reached Rome, the greatest of cities.[1] His contemporary, St Kentigern, according to our record of his life, made seven visits to Rome, for the purpose of transacting ecclesiastical business with Gregory the Great; but then this record of Kentigern's life was written by Jocelyn of Ferns in the twelfth century.[2]

[1] Reeves's Columba, 183, 241.

[2] The later legends about St Columba give the particulars of a visit which he also paid to the same Gregory at Rome; and if we accept of the rest of the legend, we may easily take in this also. Brandubh, a very popular king of Ireland, died; and whenever the soul was released, certain demons seized on it, and made off with it through the air. Maedhog, abbot of Ferns, standing among the reapers, heard the cries of the soul thus tormented by the demons, and, finding it a case for the exercise of his supernatural powers, rushed into the air, doing battle with the demons. The quarrelling group passed over Iona, where Columba, writing in his chamber, heard the noise, and, knowing what it imported, stuck his style or pencil into his cloak, and, ascending, joined in the contest. The noisy group passed over Rome, where Columba dropped his pencil. It was immediately taken up and preserved by Pope Gregory. The remainder of the legend is not very consistent with the desire to rescue Brandubh's soul from demons. Columba followed the soul into heaven, and there, we are told, he found the congregation at celebration, in which he joined as if he were one of them. The celebration was *Te decet hymnus*, and *Benedic anima mea*, and *Laudate pueri Dominum*. In the end the champions brought Brandubh's soul back to his body. Columba seems to have been disturbed by the loss of his pencil. Perhaps another was not easily to be got in the Western Isles, where Johnson, when he despaired of recovering his lost walking-stick, said, "Consider, sir, the value of such a piece of timber in this part of the world." In fact, as he passed again he dropped in upon St Gregory at Rome, with whom he remained for some time. Gregory kept the pencil, but presented Columba with a brooch, which afterwards became renowned.—Reeves's Adamnan, 205.

The rules of asceticism and obedience were in strict force among the brotherhood. The relaxations, dictated by the spirit of hospitality, show the severity of the ordinary rule. When a stranger arrived on a fast-day there would be a *consolatio cibi*, permitting of a slight refection of bread and milk before evening. On one occasion the principles of asceticism and obedience came curiously into collision: a pragmatical brother persists in abstinence, refusing to partake in the meagre hospitalities dedicated to the advent of a stranger. Such ostentatious self-constituted asceticism must be put down, and it encountered the severe denunciation of the superior, who told the too self-righteous disciple that the day would come when he would struggle with starving banditti for a meal of putrid horseflesh—a doom which the biographer of course traces to its practical conclusion. The most torturing penances, like the most arduous duties, must be undergone without a murmur. It is indeed difficult to believe in the abject obedience of the brethren, and their ecstatic veneration for the superior who ruled them with a rod of iron, without supposing that to their belief he was absolutely environed with supernatural qualities and powers.

Remembering the poverty of Iona at the present day, and the remoteness of the island from the frequented world, nothing is more remarkable in its early annals than the busy intercourse with the world which they appear to disclose. Guests, illustrious by kingly descent or ecclesiastical rank, were ever coming and going. In his native Ireland Columba was wont to travel in a chariot; in Iona there would be little use of such a vehicle, but there appears to have been a small fleet

of vessels at his disposal. There were horses, cattle, and sheep on the island, and the extent to which farming operations seem to have been conducted, either there or along some of the neighbouring coasts, would seem inconsistent with the capacity of those barren rocks, if we did not remember that a considerable community must have found the means of living in Iona without drawing their supplies from distant places.

CHAPTER VIII.

Early Christianity.

(Continued.)

COLUMBA'S DISCIPLES AND SUCCESSORS—ADAMNAN, HIS BIOGRAPHER—THE NUMEROUS SAINTS—CONSTITUTION OF EARLY NORTHERN SAINTSHIP—PREVALENCE IN THE CELTIC RACE—ST TERNAN—ST SERF AND OTHER MINOR SAINTS—ST CORMAC AND HIS ADVENTURES—ST MAELRUBHA AND HIS NORTHERN ESTABLISHMENT—THE GREAT QUESTION OF EASTER—COMMUNICATIONS AND CONTEST WITH THE NORTHERN ENGLISH CHURCH—PAULINUS—AIDAN—FINNIAN—THE QUESTION OF THE TONSURE—THE CATHOLIC SHAPE AND THE SCOTS SHAPE—PRESSURE OF CATHOLIC UNITY ON THE SCOTS CHURCH—SPREAD OF COLUMBITE CHURCHES—CALAMITIES OF THE CENTRAL ESTABLISHMENT AT IONA.

HISTORY has largely profited from the devotion with which the disciples of Columba commemorated his acts and virtues. Among other memorialists who were his contemporaries, or nearly so, Cummenus Albus, the seventh abbot of Iona, wrote a book on the virtues of Columba. His death was sixty years after that of Columba, whom he may have seen and known in his youth. The matter of this, as well as of other eulogistic and biographical notices, mingled, doubtless, with a considerable quantity of verbal tradition, was incorporated in the great work dedicated by the piety

of St Adamnan, the ninth abbot, to the memory of the founder of his house. It is important to remember that this author was born so early as the year 624, just a quarter of a century after the death of Columba. He was more than a mere recluse, whose thoughts are limited to the established routine and the devotional exercises of a convent. Like all the other Celtic ecclesiastical dignitaries of the day, he was highly connected—*ortus regibus.* He spent a great portion of his days in Ireland, where he had every opportunity of acquiring the scholarship which the incursions of the Northmen and intestine wars had not yet blotted out. He had opportunities at the same time of enlarging his mind by contact with the infant efforts of a new and powerful civilisation struggling into existence and shape among the Saxons; for he made frequent visits in England, and was well received at the court of the Northumbrian Alfrid, to whom, on one occasion, his countrymen commissioned him as a sort of ambassador, to negotiate for the restoration of certain Dalriads taken prisoners in battle. The inquisitive and discursive character of his mind is shown by this, that having once fallen in with a foreign wanderer who had sojourned among the holy places in Palestine, Adamnan took from his mouth a description of them, which, hundreds of years afterwards, was found and published as the earliest account, coming from modern Christian Europe, of the condition of the cradle of Christianity. His wide acquaintance with the practice of the Church prompted him, as we shall presently see, to be the first to urge upon the Irish Church and its colony in Scotland conformity with the rest of the Church on certain points where his brethren had a practice of their own.

He wrote in Latin, in a peculiar style, which will not stand criticism on the standard of the Roman classical Latin, but is yet a serviceable language, in which he expresses what he has to say distinctly. No doubt the great bulk of his Life of Columba is occupied by vaticinations and miraculous fables. But there are small facts to be found in the telling of the large fictions; and if we disbelieve all narratives because they have the supernatural in them, it is difficult to say at what period true ecclesiastical history commenced, or, speaking strictly, is to commence. We can believe that Columba went over the Grampians to visit Brud, king of the Picts, on the borders of the Ness, and that his royal blood and saintly character gave him power to adjust the succession to the kingship of Dalriada, without the necessity of believing that he miraculously saved the life of the heathen priest at the Pictish court, or that he prophesied the fate of the sons of the Dalriadic king. All that is to be regretted in Adamnan's book is, that the notices of the men and the customs of the time should be so scant in comparison with that portion of his work which doubtless, to himself and those for whom it was intended, was its only element of value; the scattered incidents of practical life which are now greedily caught up by the historical inquirer having been to the writer the mere references to time, places, and persons, by which he identified and rendered practically emphatic the heavenly teaching and the miraculous actions of an accepted saint. The value of the few incidents of history and social life in Adamnan's book may be estimated by remembering that it was written in the seventh century, and that we have to pass through seven hundred years to the four-

teenth ere we reach the period of Fordun and the other chroniclers who have hitherto been the fathers of Scottish history. This is a wide gap. We may attribute it, with many other gaps in European history, to the invasions of the Northmen, a second breaking in upon the feeble resuscitation of Roman civilisation. The recluses of Iona, as we shall see, had to seek refuge from these marauders, and resumed their seat with faded lustre.

Not only do we find St Columba's own name obtaining an influence so prevalent in Scotland as to outlive the Reformation and all other ecclesiastical revolutions, but many other Irishmen, who were either followers or fellow-labourers of his, have obtained a permanent hold on Scottish local nomenclature and tradition. Preserving, as they do, a faint but enduring commemoration in the ecclesiastical divisions, and the names of places in Scotland, it is interesting to find them identified and traced back to their homes and schools in Ireland by the scholarly labours of the Irish antiquaries. They are nearly all spoken of as saints; and in fact the missionary and the saint mean, in the ecclesiastical history of that time and place, much the same thing. There was no regulation for canonisation, and no purging of the list of saints. Collections of their lives were like biographical dictionaries of eminent men in later times. The names of the less important men, or of those who had not the fortune to be commemorated by lively biographers, would drop by degrees from each successive compilation; but all who had the fortune to be retained in biography were to be counted eminent, and so all those early churchmen whose lives and deeds continued to be recorded

were to be counted saints. Many of them at the same time had the holy attribute assigned to them in a more distinct and permanent form by a place in the Scottish commemoration-book or Breviary. Here, down to the Reformation, the deaths and miracles of these Irish saints who served in Scotland were continued, not only as the knowledge, but as the worship of the people.[1]

It would be a tedious task to enumerate these fathers of Christianity; and yet, though all that can be said about any of them is very meagre, their names should not be altogether overlooked, were it only for the sake of giving some idea of the extent to which their memory is preserved in local history and nomenclature.

Among the most illustrious of these was Donnan, called, in the collect to his service in the Breviary of Aberdeen, confessor and abbot. There were, it seems, three saints of this name in Ireland, and the Donnan who followed Columba is identified, through the diligence of the Irish antiquaries, by the day of his martyrdom, which was Sunday the 17th of April 617—his day also, of course, in the calendar. He was a few years younger than Columba. The great event of his life was his martyrdom in the island of Eigg, a small island of the Hebrides north of Iona, conspicuous for the lofty quartz peak called the Scuir of Eigg. According to the most ancient martyrologies, Donnan landed there with fifty disciples. He was told by Columba to expect martyrdom, and the doom was inflicted by a fierce woman, the queen or female chief of the island.[2] Whether before or through his death, he succeeded in planting the cross in Eigg, for a successor serving there is recorded to have died about a century

[1] Breviarium Aberdonense.

[2] Reeves's Adamnan, 304-309.

later; and Martin, in his wanderings among the Western Isles at the beginning of the eighteenth century, tells us that there "is a church here, in the east side of the isle, dedicated to St Donnan," and that "St Donnan's Well, which is in the south-west end, is in great esteem among the natives, for St Donnan is the celebrated tutelar of this isle."[1] There are many places among the Western Isles and Highlands named Kildonnan, as the sites of religious houses dedicated to the martyr. There are two in the south-western Lowlands, one in Wigtownshire, another in Ayrshire; and at the other extremity of the Scottish Lowlands, at Auchterless, in the interior of Aberdeenshire, a church was dedicated to St Donnan, where Dempster, who lived near it, says that his pastoral staff was preserved; and a cattle-market held periodically in April is still called Donnan fair.[2]

Conspicuous among the companions or disciples of Columba was Cormac, of the tribe of Lethan, who claimed descent from Oillil Ollum, an illustrious king of Munster. He seems to have had a strong liking for the sea, and he often took boat from Ireland to visit his friends in Iona. His reception on one of these occasions gives us a peep into monastic life, and the incidents that might enliven it, touched with the customary homage to the preternatural powers of the saint. The brethren are talking about Cormac. He had sailed some time before to the Orkney Islands, and they are speculating from appearances whether or not he has had a prosperous voyage. The voice of the saint breaks in on their prattle. They shall see Cormac himself

[1] Martin's Western Islands, 277.

[2] Collection for the History of Aberdeen and Banff, 506.

that very day, and have the account of his fortune from his own lips. Accordingly, an hour or so afterwards, Cormac steps into the oratory, to the delighted surprise of all, and their strengthened confidence in the prophetic gifts of their chief. But a journey to Iona—even to Orkney—seems to have been but a step to Cormac. We are told of a wild voyage of fourteen days' duration straight northwards before he touched land, whence it has been supposed that he went as far as Iceland. He encountered not only the usual perils of the deep, but the attacks of sea-monsters of hideous and unknown form, which struck against the oars, and threatened to break through the leather sides of the vessel; for a currach or coracle made of skins stretched on a skeleton of wood, propelled by oars, was the frail vessel in which the missionary sought the deep.[1]

[1] "Ut pelliceum tectum navis penetrales putarentur penetrare posse." —Adam., ii. 42. Such incidents are told by the older hagiologists with a succinct dryness that leaves abundant space to be supplied by the imagination. How the emptiness can be filled up by genius, helped by the faith proper to the purpose, we may see in the following passage, grouping together this and some other incidents briefly referred to in the text:—

"Columba's prayers, his special and ardently desired blessing, and his constant and passionate intercession for his brethren and disciples, were the grand safeguard of the navigators of Iona, not only against wind and shipwrecks, but against other dangers which have now disappeared from these coasts. Great fishes of the cetaceous order swarmed at that time in the Hebridean sea. The sharks ascended even into the Highland rivers, and one of the companions of Columba, swimming across the Ness, was saved only by the prayer of the saint, at the moment when he was but an oar's length from the odious monster, which had before swallowed one of the natives. The entire crew of a boat manned by monks took fright and turned back one day on meeting a whale, or perhaps only a shark more formidable than its neighbours; but on another occasion, the same Baithen, who was the friend and successor of Columba, encouraged by the holy abbot's blessing, had more courage, continued his course, and saw the monster bury itself in the waves. 'After all,' said the monk, 'we are both in the hands of God, both this monster and I.'

We get something like a tangible notion of the object and character of Cormac's journeys in some arrangements that preceded the voyage to Orkney. It is one of the few brief notices in which the biographer of

Other monks, sailing in the high northern sea, were panic-struck by the appearance of hosts of unknown shellfish, who, attaching themselves to the oars and sides of the boat, made holes in the hide with which the framework was covered.

"It was neither curiosity nor love of gain, nor even a desire to convert the pagans, which stimulated Columba's disciples to dare all the dangers of navigation in one of the most perilous seas of the world; it was the longing for solitude, the irresistible wish to find a more distant retreat, an asylum still farther off than that of Iona, upon some unknown rock amid the loneliness of the sea, where no one could join them, and from which they never could be brought back. They returned to Iona without having discovered what they were in search of, sad yet not discouraged; and after an interval of rest always took to sea again, to begin once more their anxious search. It was thus that the steep and almost inaccessible island of St Kilda, made famous by the daring of its bird-hunters, was first discovered; then far to the north of the Hebrides and even of the Orcades they reached the Shetland Isles, and even, according to some, Iceland itself, which is only at the distance of a six days' voyage from Ireland, and where the first Christian church bore the name of St Columba. Another of their discoveries was the Faröe Islands, where the Norwegians at a later date found traces of the sojourn of the Irish monks —Celtic books, crosses, and bells. Cormac, the boldest of these bold explorers, made three long, laborious, and dangerous voyages, with the hope, always disappointed, of finding the wilderness of which he dreamed. The first time on landing at Orkney he escaped death, with which the savage inhabitants of that archipelago threatened all strangers, only by means of the *recommendations* which Columba had procured from the Pictish king, himself converted, to the still pagan king of the northern islanders. On another occasion the south wind drove him for fourteen successive days and nights almost into the depths of the icy ocean, far beyond anything that the imagination of man had dreamed of in those days.

"Columba, the father and head of those bold and pious mariners, followed and guided them by his ever-vigilant and prevailing prayers. He was in some respects present with them, notwithstanding the distance which separated them from the sanctuary and from the island harbours which they had left. Prayer gave him an intuitive knowledge of the dangers they ran. He saw them, he suffered and trembled for them; and immediately assembling the brethren who remained in the monastery by the sound of the bell, offered for them the prayers of the com-

Columba brings persons of the day in a life-like shape before us. Columba is on one of his proselytising visits at the court of Brud, king of the Picts, "beyond the back of Britain," or the Grampian range, perhaps by the side of the Ness, as we have on another occasion found King Brud's court. There the saint meets with a secular visitor to the same court—the Regulus of Orkney. He takes the occasion of the meeting to desire King Brud to enjoin this Regulus, as his tributary, to give protection to his own friend Cormac, who, in his wanderings, is likely to find his way to the Orkney Isles; and we are told that, through this recommendation, Cormac's life was saved when he was there in imminent danger.[1]

Cormac was one of the many Irish ecclesiastics whose name became domesticated in Scotland. Connected with his residence in the country, there are, indeed, some remains that may be contemporary with Columba's mission. A little way off from the shore of South Knapdale, in Argyleshire, opposite to the old church of Kilmory and its many sculptured monuments, is a small bare island, called Ellan Moir Vic O'Chormoig, which is rendered the Island of the Great Cormac. In the centre of it is an old ecclesiastical building—very old for Scotland. This, however, is not contemporary with the two saints, since it has been built by masons acquainted with the Norman arch, and though

munity. He implored the Lord with tears to grant the change of wind which was necessary for those at sea, and did not rise from his knees until he had a certainty that his prayers were granted. This happened often, and the saved monks, on returning from their dangerous voyages, hastened to him to thank and bless him for his prophetic and beneficent aid."—Montalembert, Monks of the West, iii. 222-26.

[1] Adamnan, lib. ii. c. 42.

it has few distinctive features, can yet be fixed as a work not earlier than the eleventh century. There is a stone in a recess within it, reputed by tradition to be the tomb of Cormac, with a recumbent image of a churchman above it; but these things are still later than the oldest part of the church. They all go, along with a still more recent addition to the church, to show the veneration in which the saint's name was held for centuries.

There is, however, another piece of stone-work that might almost escape observation. It consists of two thick walls within a cleft, the sides of which partly support them. These walls are built with much pains, of thin slabs of stone without cement. There is no arch or roof over them, but the top could have been easily covered by beams and turf, and there is a square-topped entrance-door. At the end of this primitive building is a deep narrow cavern of the kind used by the early anchorites. The whole may be of any antiquity, and it is quite within the bounds of probability that one of Columba's companions dwelt there. As we have already seen, there are some other unarched buildings in the far west which may be of like age, but we have not the same trace of connection between them and any of these early missionaries.

Another follower of Columba has lately come forth in remarkable and rather startling light. All through Argyleshire there are scattered the sites or remains of ecclesiastical buildings, coming under names which have a generic similarity—as Kilmary, Kilmory, Kilmorich, Kilmora or Kilmoray. Near Applecross, in Ross-shire, is the beautiful mountain-lake called Loch Maree, and one among its many islands, with many

ecclesiastical traditions clustering round it, is Eilen Maree. Local tradition in some instances connected these names with that of the Virgin, and the parochial clergy, when drawing on their etymological resources, were still more decisive in having it so. Still there were in some instances faint traditions of an eminent person, who might have been called a saint in old superstitious times, whose memory was connected with some of these spots. So obstinately, indeed, had such a legend attached itself to Loch Maree and the adjoining Applecross, that in the seventeenth century the ecclesiastical tribunals had a severe conflict to make the people abandon some strange rites for the propitiation of the spirit of the place—rites that, if they were accurately described by the ecclesiastical authorities, partook not merely of the abjured ceremonies of the old Church, but of the incantations and material sacrifices of heathendom. It was more to the point that some connection could be made out between the being so commemorated and a certain Maelrubius, who has his day and his appropriate service in the accepted breviary of the old Church in Scotland.[1] This commemorative biography connected him with the church of Applecross, which was distinguished as the place of sepulture of his martyred body.[2]

The legend brought him to a martyr's death at the hand of the northern pirates, and it was accompanied by the usual miraculous manifestations. All this might point to some possible churchman of the early centuries, born and bred in Scotland, whose reputed

[1] Breviarium Aberdonense, Pars Æstiv., fol. lxxxix.

[2] "Corpusque ad basilicam quæ a vulgo dicitur Appilcroce transferri," &c.—Ibid.

holiness of life had made him one of those by popular tradition placed on the list of the saints. Were there no more than this to found on, farther search were useless; traditions might be heaped together to any amount, but nothing of a distinct biographical character need be hoped for.

It would be otherwise if he were one of the distinguished band who came over with Columba. The Irish antiquaries have identified him as one of these; and the consequence is, that out of their old hagiological literature they have drawn an account of St Maelrubha so distinct, both biographically and genealogically, that it would do credit to a modern peerage.[1]

According to these accounts he was the founder of a great monastic house, ruling over several subordinate establishments. The spot honoured by his selection did credit to his taste in scenery, for few districts, even of western Scotland, excel Applecross in the abundance and variety of objects, both beautiful and grand, scat-

[1] Dr Reeves gives us a connected summary in 'St Maelrubha, his History and Churches:'—"St Maelrubha, son of Elgana and Subtan, descended on his father's side from Niall the Great, through the Cinel Owen race, and by his mother from the Dalriadian stock, and, through her, nearly related to St Comgall, was born on the 3d of January 642. He received his early training at his kinsman's famous monastery of Bangor, where he rose so much in esteem that, according to some authorities, he became the abbot, or, what is more probable, was appointed to the subordinate station of prior. In 671, having attained his twenty-ninth year, he left his native country and withdrew to Scotland. Two years, which were probably spent in choosing a place of abode, having elapsed, he settled in 673 at Apurcrossan, on the north-west coast of Scotland, where he founded a church, which became the nucleus of a conventual establishment, following the order of Bangor, and for a long period affiliated to that monastery. After a presidency of fifty-one years, during which time he enjoyed a character of great sanctity, he died a natural death at Apurcrossan, on Tuesday the 21st day of April 722, at the age of eighty years, three months, and nineteen days."—Proceedings Antiq. Scot., iii. 264.

tered around. He was not cruelly martyred by the Northmen, but lived in the midst of his own people to a good old age.

Far more significant, however, than the history of the life of the saint himself, is the traditional history of his great foundation, and its subsidiary religious houses. A large group of churches and cells, supposed, from their names as traditionally preserved, to have been dedicated by the early Scottish Church to the Virgin Mary, are thus taken from her and given to this Maelrubha. Twenty-one different spots, scattered over the west and north of Scotland, have, in some instances not with complete success, been connected with his name in his capacity of saint.[1] This curious extinction of traditional etymologies touches on the question, whether the deification of the Virgin was an ancient usage of the Church, and harmonises with the belief of some inquirers, that it was at all events not an ancient usage of the Scottish Church.

Those who study old breviaries for purposes other than devotional, know that, apart from the inextricable complexities of the purely ritual elements of the book, there is a little repository of biography in the *Proprium sanctorum*, full of characteristic and curious memorials. The breviary or the missal which had established its use over any district, generally tells us of the saints who were of most influence within it, by enlarging on their services or sufferings. They instruct sometimes in what they want, as well as in what they contain. A missal of the period when Scotland was alienated from England has no service for the great St Thomas-à-Becket, to the English clergy the most thoroughly

[1] By Dr Reeves, in his paper cited above.

national of all their ecclesiastical heroes.[1] The Breviary of Aberdeen in this way commemorates a crowd of saints especially dear to the old Church, as it was in the north.[2]

On turning the Gothic pages, we come, one after another, through a crowd of these ancient saints. We thus see that they were familiar objects of reverence with the people of Scotland nearly 1000 years after the time of their sojourn in the flesh—down, in fact, to the Reformation, when at once they were plunged into oblivion, so far as the prevailing ecclesiastical literature is concerned, though their memory, ever growing more indistinct, lingered for some time round the spots which they were believed to have especially sanctified. In turning the pages, the immense preponderance of Celtic names is conclusively distinct. We have, indeed, a crowd of early saints venerated in Scotland, whose Celtic origin is brought individually home to them. There is little doubt that at the time when they existed there was a large Teutonic element in Scotland, yet

[1] It is in the Advocates' Library, Edinburgh, where the omission is noticed in a recent note at the beginning. See an account of it in Forbes, Preface to Missale de Arbuthnott, p. xxxvii.

[2] The Breviarium Aberdonense, which seems to have established in Scotland something like the supremacy of the 'Usum Sarum' in England, was printed by Walter Chapman in the year 1500. Only two copies of it were known to be in existence; they were both imperfect, but between them a complete reprint was practicable. The whole Breviary was reprinted at London in 1854, in two volumes quarto, making one of the finest specimens of facsimile reprinting in existence. There is no introduction to the reprint, though the opportunity might have been a good one for drawing on liturgical learning. No doubt, as a reprint it is all the more perfect in the eyes of the collector without any modern comment. There are others, however, who would have been glad to have it along with so scholarly an essay as Bishop Forbes's Preface to the 'Liber Ecclesiæ Beati Terrenani de Arbuthnott, Missale secundum usum Ecclesiæ Sancti Andreæ.'

among those not known to be of Celtic origin it would be difficult to prove that any one came of the race now inhabiting lowland Scotland. There are some who will perhaps deem this a national distinction rather than a blot.[1]

It may be observed, in passing, that the brief notices of these holy men to be found in the ritual books of the Church, as well as the larger biographies to be found

[1] Bishop Forbes says, "The immense fertility of the Celtic Church, or the facility with which departed worthies were, in popular estimation, regarded as saints, is evident to any one who studies the map of Brittany, Cornwall, Ireland, or the Highlands of Scotland."—Preface to Missale de Arbuthnott, p. lxxii. The putting it to the man who has the best means of knowing—the editor of the Statuta Ecclesiæ Scoticanæ—what he could say for the representation of the Saxon element in the Scots Calendar, drew from him the following curious note extending the question over England :—

"I see that Bede expressly states that St Eata was an Englishman by birth. 'Eo quod esset Eata unus de duodecim pueris Aidani, quos primo episcopatus sin tempore de natione Anglorum erudiendos in Christo accepit.'—Hist. Eccl. Gent. Angl., lib. iii. cap. 26.

"S. Eata died in 685. Bede was then twelve years old, and living in the same neighbourhood, so that his testimony seems beyond challenge.

"Bede says nothing as to St Cuthbert's birthplace. But his first appearance is on the banks of the Tyne; and whether the Tyne of Newcastle or the Tyne of Haddington be meant, matters little for this purpose, as both were then within the same English kingdom of Northumberland. St Cuthbert was then a boy, so that to all intents he was an Englishman.—Vit. S. Cudb., cap. 3. Bedæ, Opera Hist., pp. 230, 231, Smith's edition.

"Is there any reason to suppose that

St Boisil of Melrose,
St Baldred of Tyningham,
St Plechelm, apostle of Gelderland,
St Abba of Coldingham,

were not of Teutonic blood?

"St Yrchard's birthplace was on the Braes of Tolmaad, in Aberdeenshire.

"In later times St Margaret and St Waldeve were both of English descent.

"Both St Ninian and St Kentigern were of British birth—Celtic no doubt, but certainly not Irish. St Cadroe was clearly a Scot of Alba, not of Erin."

in the great collections, are to be taken as an exhibition of each saint's position and fame in the later traditions of the Church, rather than as a true history of his life. The brief notices here given of the early Scots saints are taken from authorities near their own day. Enough has been drawn from these to show that they do not always tell the truth, and that, indeed, they conspicuously depart from it into the region of the impossible. But they give all their miracles in a plain blunt fashion, as men of the present day would describe splendid phenomena in science. There is no circumlocution. The saint uses his supernatural powers, and effect at once follows adequate cause. Thus any small everyday incidents, or larger facts bearing on history, that happen to be mixed up with the more momentous doings of the saint, come out with a clearness that enables us in some measure to set apart the natural from the supernatural.

In the course of long use the writing of saints' lives, or hagiology, as it was called, like all other pursuits, was improved according to the notions of improvement current in the Catholic world. It was systematised and brought into the service of the Church. The supernatural elements were not withdrawn, but they were modified. It was not so much that the saint possessed isolated individual supernatural strength to do such things, but that the Deity was pleased to commemorate exceeding purity and holiness of life by some signal and generally beneficent suspension of the ordinary law of nature. How much actual belief is given to these productions by the educated of later times, even when they are sincere followers of the old Church, is one of the mysteries which it is useless to

attempt to solve. It is not the less impenetrable in the personal secret of the heart, that externally it is a phenomenon of continual occurrence in a minor form. Everyday people of all creeds and opinions are content to take things for granted on authority, declining the labour of examination, more especially from a suspicion that it may have troublesome results. The hagiologies were dictated by the Church, and so were to be received with uninquiring deference by its members.[1]

If examined as merely worldly literature, perhaps the life of a saint was, after all, not intended to be taken as an accurate biography even by a credulous person. Its spirit was fully repeated in the *éloges* pronounced on the dead members of the French Academy. It was a kind of rhapsody or written ecstasy, displaying to the best of the artist's power the idea of a poor human creature achieving all but perfection in devotion to the Deity, obedience to the moral law, and humble observance of the duties towards fellow-mortals. Perfections are strung together by such a slight thread

[1] Looking at the matter from without, one would think it a dangerous policy to descend from the high ground of the Church's authority, and endeavour to prove the occurrence of some of the greatest wonders of hagiology by induction from historical and scientific sources. A good deal of work of this kind has lately been done by zealous men. One of the most remarkable is to be seen in the recent continuation of the great Bollandist collection, which, coming to the month of October, has to deal with St Ursula and the 11,000 virgins. Through 230 close pages of what is called elephant folio, Father Victor de Buck brings together evidence to show that the affair was one of the brutalities of Attila. For those not inclined to grapple with the original, there is a pleasant account of the work and its result in an 'Essay on the Truth of Supposed Legends,' by Cardinal Wiseman, who says it is impossible to read the great work "without being perfectly amazed at the quantity of real knowledge that has been gained upon the subject, and still more at the powerful manner in which this knowledge has been handled."—Essays on Religion and Literature, edited by H. E. Manning, D.D., 243.

of personal history as may keep alive the recollection that they do not refer to any heavenly creature, but to one who, like the reader, has inhabited the poor tenement of clay. There is something to be said for the conception of a literature suited to bring every day, before the contemplative Christian, visions of glorious achievements in godliness, which yet are linked to the world and the human race by the individuality of the person to whom they are attributed. There is an elevating lesson, too, in that unselfishness which, after the saint's full task of godliness is completed, leads on to the works of supererogation which are to be credited to frailer brethren when the great account is made up. Such small items of redemption by mere human worms, instead of superseding, only tended to keep more fully in view the magnitude of the great Atonement. Looking at them in this light, there was in these ideal biographies much to supply the devout mind with elevated and beautiful thoughts, but they give very little help to the sober purposes of biography and history.

All that from these sources the Author can draw for his present purpose, is to take them as testimony to the high position which the Columban brotherhood held in the esteem of later ages of the Christian world. For the interpretation of these legends in the spirit of the times in which they were written, the fundamental quality is wanting. Yet he cannot help thinking it fortunate that they are not without an interpreter who can utter them in the language and in unison with the tastes of the nineteenth century. To unite an admiration of the practice of the British House of Commons with a devotional affection for the traditions of the old

Church, are the qualifications of a rarely-gifted man who has lately given himself to the task of illuminating with his own lights the legends of the early Scottish Church.[1]

[1] Montalembert, vol. iii. 4, of the Monks of the West. Already a characteristic passage has been taken from this eloquent work. The following are offered as farther specimens :—

"During the journey from Durrow to Clonmacnoise, Columba made a halt at one of his own monasteries, where a poor little scholar, 'of thick speech, and still more heavy aspect,' whom his superiors employed in the meanest services, glided into the crowd, and, stealthily approaching the great abbot, touched the end of his robe behind him, as the Canaanitish woman touched the robe of our Lord. Columba, perceiving it, stopped, turned round, and, taking the child by the neck, kissed him. 'Away, away, little fool!' cried all the spectators. 'Patience, my brethren,' said Columba: then turning to the boy, who trembled with fear, 'My son,' he said, 'open thy mouth, and show me thy tongue.' The child obeyed, with increasing timidity. The abbot made the sign of the cross upon his tongue, and added, 'This child, who appears to you so contemptible, let no one henceforward despise him. He shall grow every day in wisdom and virtue; he shall be reckoned with the greatest among you; God will give to this tongue, which I have just blessed, the gift of eloquence and true doctrine.' The boy grew to manhood, and became celebrated in the churches of Scotland and Ireland, where he was venerated under the name of St Ernan. He himself told this prophecy, so well justified by the event, to a contemporary of Adamnan, who has preserved all the details for us.

"These journeys, however, were not necessary to prove Columba's solicitude for the monks who filled his monasteries. He showed the same care when distant as when at hand, by the help of that miraculous foresight which came to the assistance of his paternal anxiety in all their spiritual and temporal necessities. One day, after his return from Ireland, he was heard to stop suddenly short in the correspondence or transcription in which he had been engaged in his little cell in Iona, and cry with all his strength, 'Help, help!' This cry was addressed to the guardian angel of the community, and the appeal was made on behalf of a man who had fallen from the top of the round tower which was then being built at Durrow, in the centre of Ireland—so great was his confidence in what he himself called the indescribable and lightning speed of the flight of angels; and greater still was his trust in their protection. Another time at Iona, in a day of chilly fog, such as occurs often in that sombre climate, he was suddenly seen to burst into tears. When asked the reason of his distress, he answered, 'Dear son, it is not without reason that I weep. At this very hour I see my dear monks of Durrow

We must not leave the Columban brotherhood without noticing the most important affair in which, as a body, they figure in the external history of church affairs.

condemned by their abbot to exhaust themselves in this dreary weather building the great round tower of the monastery, and the sight overwhelms me.' The same day, and at the same hour, as was afterwards ascertained, Laisran, the abbot of Durrow, felt within himself something like an internal flame, which reawakened in his heart a sentiment of pity for his monks. He immediately commanded them to leave their work, to warm themselves, and take some food, and even forbade them to resume their building until the weather had improved. This same Laisran afterwards came to deserve the name of Consoler of the Monks, so much had he been imbued by Columba with that supernatural charity which, in monastic life, as in every other Christian existence, is at once a light and a flame, *ardens et lucens*. . . .

One winter's night, a young man who was destined to succeed Columba as fourth abbot of Iona remained in the church while the others slept: all at once he saw the abbot come in preceded by a golden light which fell from the heights of the vaulted roof, and lighted all the corners of the building, even including the little lateral oratory where the young monk hid himself in alarm. All who passed during the night before the church, while their old abbot prayed, were startled by this light, which dazzled them like lightning. Another of the young monks, whose education was specially directed by the abbot himself, resolved to ascertain whether the same illumination existed in Columba's cell; and notwithstanding that he had been expressly forbidden to do so, he got up in the night and went groping to the door of the cell to look in, but fled immediately, blinded by the light that filled it.

"These signs, which were the forerunners of his deliverance, showed themselves for several years towards the end of his life, which he believed and hoped was nearer its termination than it proved to be. But this remnant of existence, from which he sighed to be liberated, was held fast by the filial love of his disciples, and the ardent prayers of so many new Christian communities founded or ministered to by his zealous care. Two of his monks, one Irish and one Saxon, of the number of those whom he admitted to his cell to help him in his labour or to execute his instructions, saw him one day change countenance, and perceived in his face a sudden expression of the most contrary emotions: first a beatific joy, which made him raise to heaven a look full of the sweetest and tenderest gratitude; but a minute after this ray of supernatural joy gave place to an expression of heavy and profound sadness. The two spectators pressed him with questions which he refused to answer. At length they threw themselves at his knees and begged him, with tears, not to afflict them

The readers of books relating to the ecclesiastical history of Britain at this time, must be familiar with the existence of the great dispute about the time of holding Easter, though they may not have thought fit

by hiding what had been revealed to him. 'Dear children,' he said to them, 'I do not wish to afflict you. . . . Know, then, that it is thirty years to-day since I began my pilgrimage in Caledonia. I have long prayed God to let my exile end with this thirtieth year, and to recall me to the heavenly country. When you saw me so joyous, it was because I could already see the angels who came to seek my soul. But all at once they stopped short, down there upon that rock at the farthest limit of the sea which surrounds our island, as if they would approach to take me, and could not. And, in truth, they could not, because the Lord has paid less regard to my ardent prayer than to that of the many churches which have prayed for me, and which have obtained, against my will, that I should still dwell in this body for four years. This is the reason of my sadness. But in four years I shall die without being sick; in four years, I know it and see it, they will come back, these holy angels, and I shall take my flight with them towards the Lord.' . . . He went down to the monastery, entered his cell, and began to work for the last time. He was then occupied in transcribing the Psalter. When he had come to the 33d Psalm and the verse, *Inquirentes autem Dominum non deficient omni bono*, he stopped short. 'I must stop here,' he said; 'Baithen will write the rest.' Baithen, as has been seen, was the steward of Iona, and was to become its abbot. After this the aged saint was present at the vigil service before Sunday in the church. When he returned to his cell he seated himself upon the naked stones which served the septuagenarian for bed and pillow, and which were shown for nearly a century near his tomb. Then he intrusted to his only companion a last message for the community: 'Dear children, this is what I command with my last words—let peace and charity, a charity mutual and sincere, reign always among you! If you act thus, following the example of the saints, God who strengthens the just will help you, and I, who shall be near Him, will intercede on your behalf, and you shall obtain of Him not only all the necessities of the present life in sufficient quantity, but still more the rewards of eternal life, reserved for those who keep His law.'

"These were his last words. As soon as the midnight bell had rung for the matins of the Sunday festival, he rose and hastened before the other monks to the church, where he knelt down before the altar. Diarmid followed him, but as the church was not yet lighted he could only find him by groping and crying in a plaintive voice, 'Where art thou, my father?' He found Columba lying before the altar, and, placing

to study its merits. Apart altogether from these, we shall see that the external conditions of the dispute give it a great interest in political and ecclesiastical history. Before the Council of Nice there were considerable diversities throughout the Christian world in the method of calculating the annual return of Easter. It was the peculiarity of the Eastern Church generally, that they held it on the fourteenth day of the paschal moon, or first Jewish month, whether that day were Sunday or not. The Jewish passover, held on the fourteenth, or full moon, and the Christian commemoration, were apt to coincide. The Council of Nice, in 325, established as a rule over the Christian world that Easter must be celebrated on a Sunday, that the Sunday must be the first after the fourteenth day of the paschal moon, and that the paschal moon is that of which the fourteenth day follows the vernal equinox, fixed on the 21st of March. The regulation might be complicated, but it was distinct, and the Church at large was directed to obey it.

The Irish ecclesiastics, however, and their Scottish mission, followed a traditional method of their own in the fixing of the day which was to be observed as Easter. Bede tells us that they thought the day of the resurrection was to be celebrated between the 14th and 20th of the moon, and that they were obstinate in

himself at his side, raised the old abbot's venerable head upon his knees. The whole community soon arrived with lights, and wept as one man at the sight of their dying father. Columba opened his eyes once more, and turned them to his children on either side with a look full of serene and radiant joy. Then with the aid of Diarmid he raised, as best he might, his right hand to bless them all; his hand dropped, the last sigh came from his lips; and his face remained calm and sweet like that of a man who in his sleep had seen a vision of heaven."

adhering to that tradition. In the long controversy through which they maintained it, their adversaries charged them with a preference for the passover of the Jews over the Christian sacrament, and at the same time endeavoured to prove that they had blundered in their application of the paschal week, and that their Easter was liable to stray out of the limits of the Jewish law as well as the precept of the Christian gospel. The large space occupied by this controversy in the early history of the Christian Church in Europe, is a lasting testimony to the important position held by the Scoto-Irish Christian communities. One of their eminent saints, Columbanus—sometimes not unnaturally confounded with Columba—brought censure on himself by insisting on following the Scottish practice so far from its native home as Burgundy. It was, however, in England that the contest raged hottest; and there, indeed, it assumed the significant type of a contest of the locally powerful Columbites with the missionaries who came from Rome as the head of Christendom, demanding implicit obedience to the regulations adopted there.

It was shortly before the middle of the seventh century, and in the time of Abbot Seganius, the third in succession from St Columba, that a member of the order was desired as a pastor to the Northumbrians, partly converted to Christianity. Their king, Oswald, in his banishment, had taken refuge in Scotland, and had there received some Christian training. When he requested the Columban establishment to send one of their number to take the ecclesiastical charge of his kingdom, a certain Paulinus, not otherwise known, was appointed to the duty. He returned in a very short

time to the fraternity, tired of his task; and the monk of Iona explained to his brethren that he found the barbarity of the inhabitants of Durham and Yorkshire unendurable. The Columban brethren were seriously grieved for the lot of the Northumbrians, and still eager to help them. One blessed with greater missionary zeal, or more geniality for the task, only found in that which proved so repulsive to Paulinus an attractive field of duty: this was the illustrious Aidan, whose virtues and services are commemorated by Bede with so much earnestness and eloquence. Discoursing on his innocence and abstemiousness, on his genuine piety and his untiring perseverance in his pastoral duties, the historian of the Church has to admit one blot in Aidan—his opposition to the usage of the Church in the observance of Easter. But he had a thorough veneration for Aidan, and made the best of the defect, explaining that he did not adopt the Jewish full moon, but took the first Lord's day after the full moon as his day for the celebration of Easter. It was now more than three hundred years since the matter had been settled by the Council of Nice. It had been forgotten that there ever was such a question open to debate; and with many other things which had been matter of discussion and dispute in the early Christian Church, it was in the seventh century established at Rome, and deemed the law of all portions of the Church which acknowledged the supremacy of the Bishop of Rome, that the method of fixing Easter now set down in the usual chronological authorities, and adopted in almanacs, is the only true method. That the Church of Ireland and Scotland should thus have held its own method uninterrupted for so long

a time, is one of the many conditions which show how entirely it was separated from the Romish connection and influence. Bede makes excuses for the Columban community as a body so far out of the world, that there was no one to bring to them the synodical decrees concerning Easter; and he compassionates them as men left, without any supreme guidance, to find the paths of piety and goodness for themselves in the prophetical, evangelical, and apostolical Scriptures.[1]

Aidan was a mighty saint, and the places and things with which he was connected were gifted with miraculous virtues, the effect of which Bede faithfully relates, ever, at the same time, to the last lamenting that one so signally favoured should, in pursuance of a provincial tradition, have strayed from the observance of the great festival as fixed by the Church. But the Northumbrian Church still required to be spiritually supplied from Scotland. Aidan was succeeded by St Finnian, who built on the isle of Lindisfarne a church, afterwards venerated as a cathedral, and as the parent of the episcopate of the north of England. It was, as Bede says, not built of stone, but of oak, and roofed with thatch, afterwards removed by the Archbishop Theodore, who covered both roof and walls with lead.[2] Finnian was as stubborn in the Columban observance of Easter as his predecessor had been; and again Bede has to lament the single blot on the memory of one who was otherwise a true saint and servant of Christ,

[1] "In tempore quidem summæ festivitatis dubios circulos sequentes, utpote quibus longe ultra orbem positis, nemo synodalia paschalis observantiæ decreta porrexerat: tantum ea quæ in propheticis evangelicis et apostolicis lateris discere poterant, pietatis et castitatis opera diligenter observantes."—L. iii. c. 4.

[2] Bede, iii. 25.

in humility, abstinence, devotion, and all the sanctifying qualities. To one who held so large a place in the history of the English Church, it would have been impossible to deny the qualities of a great Christian missionary, without throwing a shadow on the reputation of that Church itself; and hence the perplexity of the Catholic historian, who has to record the history of men whose services as Christian missionaries made them great architects of the Catholic Church in England, who yet were, on one important point, at variance with Catholic practice as dictated from Rome. Finnian was fiercely opposed in his Easter practice by a brother, Columban, St Ronan, who, having travelled, had become a champion of the Continental practice. He appears to have been a man of high renown in the Western Scottish Church—if he be that same Ronan from whom the isle of Rona, and more than one church dedicated to St Ronan, derived their names. But as a single champion he was no match for the great St Finnian, whose name and influence were spreading with the progress of Christianity. Penda, prince of Southern Mercia, came to seek in marriage the daughter of the king of Northumbria, but could not obtain her hand, until he embraced the Christian faith, and was baptised under the auspices of Finnian, who commissioned four priests to attend him back to his father's realm, one of whom became bishop of the new Christian kingdom of Mercia when the young prince became king. The East Saxons, who had relapsed from the faith and expelled their bishop, were again to be restored to Christianity by the hand of Finnian, who baptised their king and his followers near the Roman wall when they were visiting Northumbria.

During Finnian's day his heterodoxy about Easter was, as Bede tells us, tolerated; but it would have been difficult practically to question the practice of one who was as much the head of the Church in his own district as the Pope was at Rome. In the days of his successor Colman, however, the Scottish Church was destined to meet the Continental in a formidable contest on this point. Augustin and the other missionaries from Rome had included the Scottish ecclesiastics in their pastoral addresses and admonitions, sometimes censuring their schismatic conduct in the matter of Easter; but these were such mere empty fulminations as ecclesiastical authorities are wont to discharge against those over whom they claim an unadmitted rule. Now, however, the branch of the Scottish Church in the north of England had to contest the point with the great St Wilfrid, who, like Ronan, had sojourned among the Continental churches, but who had the advantage of being a brother Saxon, and brought to his side of the controversy the support of Alfrid, the son of Osway the king.

It was determined that a great discussion should be held on this and some minor points of observance in the monastery of the Bay of the Lighthouse—now called Whitby—presided over by the celebrated abbess Hilda. The date commonly given to this meeting is the year 664; and a clear account is given of it by Bede, who doubtless heard it discussed with animation by fathers of the Church in his day, acquainted with persons who had been present, if they had not themselves been so. We have Wilfrid's arguments, doctrinal, traditional, and chronological, at length. But the feature of historical interest in his pleading comes towards the end,

when he charges his opponents with sinning against the decrees of the Apostolic See and the universal Church.[1]

This was probably the first occasion on which the Scottish Columban ecclesiastics heard the authority of the See of Rome solemnly referred to as a rule requiring their obedience. The controversy ends in a manner characteristic enough for its own day, but not easily to be described at this time without an appearance of levity. Wilfrid referred for the Catholic observance to the sanction of Peter, the prince of the apostles, who held the keys of the kingdom of heaven. The king, turning to Colman, asked if this said of St Peter's powers were true. It was. Had any such power been given to Columba? His follower could not say there had. To the perceptions of the monarch the way of a solution was now clear. He would not contradict him who kept the key of the door to salvation, lest when he presented himself there he might be refused admittance by the person he had offended.

The controversy about the observance of Easter was accompanied by a minor dispute about the Tonsure, or shaving of the head as a sign of dedication to the Church. The practice in those churches which professed the catholic unity of the See of Rome was to shave a circular area on the crown of the head, leaving it surrounded by a circle of hair. The Catholic party, as we may call them, were astonished and horrified to find that the Columbites shaved a long narrow streak in the shape of a crescent from ear to ear, leaving unshaven a narrow semicircle in front and the crown

[1] Decreta Sædis Apostolicæ immo universalis Ecclesiæ, iii. 25.

and back of the head. There have been several theories of the symbolic meaning of the tonsure; and if the prevailing theory, that it symbolised the crown of thorns, be the true one, the Columbites and their Irish brethren had certainly misunderstood it. The Abbot Ceolfrid, in his letter to the king of the Picts, presently to be noticed, explains this symbolisation in an appropriate and attractive manner. The tonsure is a crown, but it is a crown symbolical of humility and suffering—of humility, as it removes the honours from the head, and exposes it shaven to the scorn of the thoughtless; of humility and suffering together, as it represents the crown of thorns around the Saviour's head. The Columbite tonsure, he said, might look like a crown in front, but behold it from the side, how grotesque it then became. In discussing the matter with St Adamnan, Ceolfrid had recourse to arguments more of this world, asserting boldly that the Columbites had adopted the tonsure of Simon Magus.[1] Another method of debasing it was the assertion that it had been introduced by the swineherd of the pagan king who resisted the missionary labours of St Patrick.[2] Adamnan yielded to the arguments of the English ecclesiastics on both the objects of controversy, the observance of Easter and the tonsure, when he was on a visit, or perhaps a mission, to his old pupil Alfrid, king of Northumbria. He endeavoured to bring the brethren over whom he ruled to the same view, but in vain. If their monastic obedience was still as absolute as in the days of Columba, it did not include compliance on such matters of old traditional observance.[3] Adamnan went to Ireland, where he was

[1] Bede, v. 21. [2] Adamnan; Reeves's Notes, 351. [3] Bede, v. 15.

more successful, at least in the southern portion of the island. But soon afterwards the pressure of Catholic unity was brought to bear on Iona. The letter of Ceolfrid, abbot of Jarrow, already referred to, was addressed to Naitan, king of the Picts, about the year 710; it occupies a considerable space in Bede's History, and may be profitably read by any one desirous of studying in full the grounds of the Catholic observance on both the disputed points, as set forth at the time when the schism was yet in existence.

We are told by Bede that King Naitan, to whom this state paper was addressed, was a studious man and an ardent seeker after Catholic truth, who had studied the matter for himself, and had come to a correct conclusion. He wished to be backed, however, by the high authority of the English ecclesiastics, and to be furnished by them with arguments sufficient to silence the gainsayers. As an inducement to give him earnest assistance in this matter, he expressed his wish to bring his dominions into general conformity with the Roman Apostolic Church, so far as the remoteness of his people from the Roman nation and language permitted. He desired, especially, that architects might be sent to him, who would build for him a church in the Roman manner, to be dedicated to St Peter. Hence the ample letter to the king of the Picts from the Abbot Ceolfrid.[1] We are told that it was translated into the Pictish language, and solemnly read to King Naitan and certain learned men. The

[1] In the preface, by Joseph Robertson, to the Statuta Ecclesiæ Scoticanæ, a suggestion is thrown out, that "the letter was written, probably by Bede's own hand, in an English monastery, in the name of the English abbot of Wearmouth and Jarrow," xvi.

sequel was, that the king accepted of the pontifical observance of Easter day and the tonsure, and decreed that it should be held among the clergy throughout his dominions.[1] Had it not been that the object of this decree was to further Catholic unity as proclaimed from Rome, Bede would hardly have accepted it acquiescingly as he does, as coming from a competent authority on matters ecclesiastical.

It is a pity that there is hardly anything of a distinct kind on the other side to tell us how this decree was received. We can only see that there were difficulties. On the community of Iona itself it does not appear that the Pictish monarch felt himself entitled to enforce conformity. Near the period of Naitan's decree there are notices in the Irish annalists of children of Iona having been driven out of the Pictish dominion. The community of Iona conformed to the unity of the Church of Rome on both questions in the year 716. This is no doubt very close on the great letter and King Naitan's decree, yet it is significant that Bede records the conformity of Iona as a separate transaction, with a cause of its own. It was the work of Egbert, one of those favourites of his, whose zeal, piety, asceticism, and sacrifice of self to the great cause, he dwells on with affectionate earnestness. Egbert had devoted himself to a mission among the heathen Frisians and Danes on the Continent, when a friend and fellow-labourer in the cause gave him a message which he professed to have received from the lips of the Saviour. Its purport was

[1] "Palam profiteor, vobisque qui adsidetis præsentibus protestor, quia hoc observare tempus Paschæ cum universa mea gente perpetuo volo; hanc accipere debere tonsuram quam plenam esse rationis audimus, omnes qui in meo regno sunt clericos decerno," v. 21.

that Egbert was not to work among the heathen, but to bring into conformity the brotherhood of Iona, whose ploughs do not go straight. Through his persuasions Iona was brought to conformity both on the holding of Easter and on the tonsure in the year 716. There was great joy in the Anglo-Saxon churches on this event; and it was noted that while the Scots had communicated to them through holy Aidan the divine truth, so had they returned the gift by bringing their erring brethren to conformity with the rule of the Church.[1]

To enumerate all the religious houses, churches, and cells planted by the Columbite brethren and ruled from Iona, would make a tedious topographical list. The manner in which they spread one after another through the country has been exemplified in the achievements of Maelrubha and other subsidiary missionaries. Spreading over Scotland, the Columban Church met that of St Cuthbert at the Firth of Forth; for nearly what Iona was to the north of Scotland, St Cuthbert's establishment at Lindisfarne was to the north of England and the Lothians. For the rest of Scotland it has been well said that "the abbots of Iona were for many years in point of fact the primates of northern Scotland, and their monastery the centre of ecclesiastical government and religious enterprise."[2]

Evil days, however, were in store for this community of pious recluses. Nothing could have been better calculated to serve the purposes of the Norse sea-rovers than the collection of valuable movables which might belong to a religious house, easily accessible from the sea. They plundered Lindisfarne and such others as

[1] Bede, b. iv. ch. 9, b. v. ch. 22.

[2] Grub, Ecclesiastical History of Scotland, i. 69.

they could find near the coasts in England and Scotland, and thoroughly exhausted whatever was to be got along the Irish shores. Iona was, however, peculiarly in their way, and had no chance of toleration from them until they should be brought under the influence of Christianity. At a very early time this, the centre of ecclesiastical government in Scotland, was paralysed, but the parts of the system held together, and seem indeed to have been comforted and assisted by the powerful houses of the same brotherhood in Ireland. Adamnan is the last of the abbots of whom we have a distinct account, although, like the genealogy of an exiled royal house, the succession was kept up; and indeed some members of the order seem to have hung round their desolated abode, taking in the spirit of martyrdom the dangers and the hardships of such a lot. The traditions of the Church tell how the holy relics of St Columba were concealed in the island, and how in the year 825 Blaithmac suffered martyrdom, being slain by a party of the rovers because he would not give them access to the relics, or rather to the shrine containing those which were likely to be worth acquiring.[1] A few years afterwards we hear of these relics being removed—one portion to Kells, in the county of Meath, in Ireland, a spot rife with memorials and traditions of St Columba. The other portion was removed to Dunkeld, to which the ecclesiastical supremacy of Iona was virtually transferred in the middle of the ninth century. The chronicles make this the establishment of a bishopric there, which was for a time the primacy of Scotland. At all events, the community there set down was endowed by King Kenneth, and was in fact so well off, that the

[1] See authorities in Lanigan, Eccles. History of Ireland, iii. 252.

Norsemen, getting scent of its possessions, were tempted to press on to that very inaccessible spot in one of their plundering expeditions, said to have been headed by the half-mythical hero, Regner Lodbroc.

The religious community so arising in Dunkeld was one of those which afterwards became so famous under the title of Culdees. Of these, as the term did not come into use until a later period, it will be as well to reserve mention until we reach another epoch in the ecclesiastical history of the country.

CHAPTER IX.

Narrative to the Union of the Scots and Picts.

HISTORY AFTER THE DEPARTURE OF THE ROMANS—STRATHCLYDE AND ITS DYNASTY—DISAPPEARANCE FROM HISTORY—PICTLAND—BATTLE OF NECHTANS-MERE—ITS INFLUENCE ON THE ADJUSTMENT OF A NATIONAL BOUNDARY—THE EXTINCTION OF THE SEPARATE PICTISH NATIONALITY—THE SCOTS—THEIR IRISH ORIGIN—CARBER RIADHA—FERGUS—AIDAN AND THE ADJUSTMENT OF THE DYNASTY—CONFERENCE OF DRUMCAT—BATTLE OF MOYRA, AND ITS EPIC—SCOTTISH CLAIMS ON IRELAND—THE CHRONICLES AND THEIR IMPORT—KING KENNETH AND THE UNION OF THE PICTS AND SCOTS—ITS MYSTERIES—CONDITION OF THE SCOTS CELTS—THEIR HIGH PLACE IN CIVILISATION.

AFTER the departure of the Romans, the first germs of events that can be called national history appear in the sixth century. The partition of the country, such as we have seen it, had not greatly varied. On the east side, the Saxon invaders pressed hard on the Britons between the walls; and when the terrible Ida at that time built himself a fortress at Bamburgh, within twenty miles of the Tweed, he seems to have ruled the country northwards to the Tay. The Britons continued to maintain an independent territory in the west, from the Solway to the Clyde; and northward the country was divided between the Picts on the east and north, and the Irish Scots on the west.

These last were in the ascendant; and as it is through them that the thread of history is connected, it will be convenient to deal briefly, in the first place, with the other two states.

The last retreat of the Romanised Britons was called originally Strathclyde, but in later times more frequently Cumbria. Since we must reject the legends of Arthur and Merlin as romances, there is very little fit to be called history that can be put in their place. We see nothing but a feeble race dwindling away before the pressure of their aggrandising neighbours. There was not sufficient vital strength in them to hold and work the civilisation which Rome had bequeathed to them. Their history is altogether a sad one. Through the imperfect and confused story of the occupation by the Romans, we can easily see that these encountered a high-spirited and warlike people, whose subjugation was difficult and dangerous work. Whether it was that they were a people not adapted for civilisation, or that the Roman kind of civilisation did not suit the race, and withered instead of nourishing its vitality, it is certain that the Britons came from the hands of their civilisers a damaged race. In the scanty notices of the chroniclers the district is generally called a kingdom, but this may have been more from the habit of using that term towards the neighbouring nations, than because there was any fixed form of monarchical government in Strathclyde. Strathclyde has less renown from its political history than as the theatre of the triumphs of St Kentigern. Through him the two kings, who were his contemporaries — Machen his persecutor, and Rederech his patron—come out of the utter dark-

ness of political into the doubtful light of ecclesiastical history.

We have the names of some other rulers of Strathclyde, but little more than the names, unless we should accept the narratives of Geoffrey of Monmouth and the Welsh traditions.[1] The Irish chronicles tell us here and there, with their usual brevity, of attacks on the Britons by their neighbours, the Picts, the Saxons, or the Scots. Sometimes the routine is varied by a raid from "the black strangers," as the Vikings were called, who pounced on any place where they could get abundant booty, with entire indifference to the nation or language of the sufferers.[2] Among the most emphatic of these casual records, it is told how, in 756, a Saxon and Pictish army, under Egbert and Unst, pressed so hard on Alcluyd or Dumbarton, that the place was surrendered to them. Four years afterwards we are told of the burning of the fortress, which was probably, after the fashion of the day, a large collection of wooden houses, protected by the height of the rock on which it stood, and, where necessary, by embankments.

There is a story, scarcely supported by sufficient evidence, how, in the year 878, a body of the harassed natives of Strathclyde fought their way through their

[1] In the more authentic Welsh chronicle, the Brut y Tywysogion, or Chronicle of the Princes, the entries about Strathclyde are few and brief. It would be difficult to find any reference to the country in the Annales Cambriæ.

[2] See during the eighth century the Annals of Ulster, the Welsh Chronicle of the Brut, the Extracts collected by Ritson, ii. 175. In the Brut the narratives are naturally turned so as to enlighten the downward progress with slight gleams of success, thus: "Seven hundred and fifty was the year of Christ when the battle between the Britons and Picts took place—to wit, the action of Maesydog; and the British killed Talargan, the king of the Picts."

enemies, and though their leader, Constantine, was killed at Lochmaben, succeeded, in considerable numbers, in reaching the shelter of their fellow-countrymen in Wales, where they continued to exist as a distinct and distinguished colony.[1]

A glimpse has been obtained of incidents which look like matrimonial alliances between the royal families of Scottish Dalriada and Strathclyde, leading to peaceful adjustments of the government of the two countries. A certain Eoch, indeed, son of a king of Strathclyde by his wife, a daughter of the king of Scots, makes his appearance as a joint ruler of the Scots along with Grig, who figures in the fabulous historians as Gregory the Great. But the whole affair is so fugitive and confused as to afford nothing but perplexity to those who have tried to unravel it.[2]

There remained so much life in the province for more than a century later, that we hear of its king, Domnal or Donald, dying in the year 975 on a pilgrimage to Rome; and in 1018, at the battle between the Scots and Saxons at Car, near Wark, in Northumberland, the king of the Strathclyde Welsh is the ally or tributary of the king of Scots.[3] A few years later, in the reign of Malcolm II., the separate kingdom became absorbed into Scotland generally.

Of the much larger territory inhabited by the Picts we have hardly more materials for the early history than we have found for Strathclyde. We have enough only to let us see a strong people, holding their own, and often formidable to their neighbours. The oldest

[1] See Chalmers, i. 355; Robertson's Early Kings, i. 54.
[2] See Chalmers, i. 354, 382; Robertson's Early Kings, i. 34.
[3] Ritson, ii. 185.

chroniclers supply the country with a complete list of kings, reaching to a very distant period. It has been customary to accept the list as genuine, from Drust, who reigned when the Romans abandoned Britain, downwards. This gives, from the middle of the fifth century to the middle of the eighth, when Pictland ceased to be a separate state, forty-three kings.[1] It is a bare catalogue, connected with but one or two isolated events; and thus, whether it affords the names of persons who were real kings, or was made to meet the demand of the old chroniclers that every state must have its regular dynasty of kings, is a matter of small moment.

The chief event in the separate history of Pictland is the missionary visit of Columba in the reign of King Brud, already twice referred to. There were wars between the Picts and their neighbours, the most formidable of whom were the aggressive Saxons. Their kingdom of Northumbria extended over the Lothians, and was separated from Pictland by the Forth. The great conqueror Ida, and his successor Ella, seem both to have had too much on their hands otherwise, and to have been shy of a contest with the Picts. Edwin, the reputed founder of Edinburgh, and his successors, Oswald and Osway, are spoken of as drawing tribute from the king of the Picts, as well as from the other northern sovereigns. The extent of the power thus spoken of is not very distinct; but it is certain that the next king, Egfrid, resolving to try the game of conquest, passed the Forth and marched into Pictland. He crossed the Tay, and penetrated inland as far as a

[1] See the list given in a chronological table in Chalmers's Caledonia, i. 207.

place called sometimes Dun-nechtan, and sometimes Nechtans-mere. It has been identified as Dunnichen, where a rising-ground with a fort on it answers to the one name, and a small adjoining lake answers to the other.

Of the details of the battle we know nothing. It has almost escaped the notice of the fabulous historians, so that we are spared the embarrassment of dealing with fictitious enumerations of troops and imaginary military operations. There can be no doubt, however, that, to carry the decisive results given to it with common consent in the early authorities, there must have been a mighty battle on the 20th of May, in the year 685. The Saxon invaders were defeated. Their general, King Egfrid, was slain. It has been said that great honour was paid to the dead king, and that he was buried in Iona, where Adamnan, the biographer of St Columba, reigned as abbot. The Saxon army was destroyed; the frontier of the Forth was abandoned; and the kingdom of Northumbria, taking its limits at the Tweed, foreshadowed the boundary-line between the England and Scotland of later times. The Saxon kings of Northumbria had established a bishopric, or, if not a bishopric, a great monastery, in the old Roman province. The centre of its influence was at Abercorn, near the Forth, and a short way westward of Queensferry. But after the battle of Nechtans-mere this ecclesiastical establishment shifted for safety to Whitby, in Yorkshire.[1]

[1] The battle of Nechtans-mere is mentioned by the chroniclers generally, but its political influence is best laid down by Bede (iv. 26), who says it was a judgment on Egfrid for making a raid on the harmless people of Ireland, and wasting even their churches and monasteries.

This affair of Nechtans-mere is, in a confused list of battles, the one that comes out in history as leaving a marked territorial influence. It is held by some to have permanently severed the country between the Tay and the Forth from the influences that would have made it part of England. Of other fights, sometimes with the Saxons and sometimes with the Scots, we have only the ancient names, leading sometimes, but not always, to the places where they were fought. The Vikings, or black strangers, would occasionally pounce upon the coast of Pictland, as elsewhere; and in the fugitive notices of their raids there is an impression that there they met a tougher enemy than they were accustomed to, and had to engage in more serious conflict.

But we have notices of other conflicts, more suggestive of hard-fought battles, within the territory of the Picts, where both armies, by name at least, were Picts. The historians, with nothing to found on but the names of the conqueror and conquered in the brief record of the chronicles, had yet to give the proper conventional harmony to their picture, and to speak of civil wars, weak and strong governments, and the suppression of rebellions. But the impression left by looking only to the materials they had to work upon is a doubt that the country of the Picts was the established kingdom it is represented to have been—a doubt not only extending to the question whether it may not have had a variety of rulers and methods of government, but whether the country was inhabited by people of one race and language. In the midst of this dimness and confusion the Pictish kingdom drops out of history, and Kenneth, the king of the Scots, is found reigning over its people in the middle of the ninth

century. The name of Picts continued to be applied to the inhabitants of Galloway, but through the north-eastern districts, where it had predominated, it rapidly faded out of use.

Such a phenomenon has naturally puzzled historians. Those of the patriotic and fabulous class—whose rise we shall afterwards have to consider as part of the history of national feeling in Scotland—naturally found a shape for it which suited the nationality of their narrative. There was but one way in which, of two hostile nations, the one should disappear from history, and that one way was conquest. The Irish origin of Scot and Scotia had then been forgotten or repudiated. The great object was, in rivalry with England, to take for Scotland the position of a great and ancient nation. There had no doubt been among them intruders called Picts, with whom they had an obstinate contest; but the might of Scotland at last prevailed, and the Picts were not only vanquished, but absolutely extirpated—not one of them left to hand down the memory of the race, save some who fled into England.[1]

In times still later, when the idea of the total extir-

[1] The Picts have left traditions of their existence. The great Roman wall was called "the Picts' Wall." There is "the Picts' Work Ditch," and "the Picts' Houses." In Orkney, the Picts or Pechts are believed in as an uncanny or elvish race—small black creatures, living underground, like the Kobolds of Germany. The late Mr Robert Stevenson, the light-house engineer, when sojourning in Orkney, was told by some people that they rejoiced to have met with a man of his learning and experience, who could decide for them a delicate question. They thought they had caught "a Pecht." If it was so, he must be put to death; but a mistake would be unpleasant. Mr Stevenson was taken to see the captive, and found sound asleep an old school-companion of his own, named Campbell, small and swarthy, afterwards celebrated as a missionary. Scott mentions this incident in his journal.

pation of a people was not thought an event so very likely that it was to be believed on the authority of tradition, when contemporary authorities said nothing about it, other theories were devised to account for the disappearance of the Picts. A favourite among these is that a union came about through royal marriages, and the opening of a united succession to the two thrones in the person of Kenneth. To prove this laborious genealogical inquiries have been made, and specialties in the Pictish principles of succession have been sought for and established to the satisfaction of the seekers. They started on a fanciful story by Bede, who sometimes gave himself to idle gossip, though not often, at least on secular matters. "The Picts," he said, "came to Scotland without wives, and on their earnest solicitation the Scots gave them wives, on a condition that when any difficulty arose in a succession to the throne, the female should have a preference to the male line." It is in vain, however, to seek a principle of succession in those times—it was a thing not discovered for centuries to come. The War of Succession in Scotland, the Wars of the Roses in England, the Hundred Years' War in France, all arose from the problem of a principle of succession not having been solved.[1]

[1] It admits but of one solution, and that is the law of primogeniture. This may be in two shapes, either by absolute primogeniture, without regard to sex, or exhausting the one sex in the first degree before the other sex in the same degree is drawn on. The succession to the crown of England is in the latter form, male taking precedence of female descendants. This is the only principle of succession, because it is as uniform and self-acting as a law of nature—as the mechanical laws of gravitation and hydrostatics. The degree of relationship being once established as a fact, there never can be any doubt of the extent of right it confers, and we at once know a claimant to be in bad faith if he has any

In times so much earlier, it is only natural that we should be unable to find a principle capable of giving effect to itself in the face of interests, prejudices, and powers. The strongest ruled, and there was an appearance of hereditary descent because the strongest person was somewhere near the last possessor. We must look to other forces for having brought the two peoples under one governor, and must be content, until we can find more specific causes, to attribute it to the influence of the high civilisation we shall find to have existed among the Scots—to the influence of this civilisation in a compact and organised government, upon a people with no strong organisation or principle of unity among themselves. It is an instance of the often invisible process of absorption and aggregation by which nations grow.

Let us now go back and trace the entrance and progress of the community which, prevailing for the time over the others, became the centre to which they gravitated, and finally gave a name to the territory inhabited by all. A chief among the Scots of Ulster, called Carber Riadha, who lived in the middle of the third century,

doubt about it. We may make other rules if we like for succession, but if they deviate from primogeniture they will never be self-acting. They will always require an interpreter, and always be liable to doubts arising from cases not anticipated by the framers of the rule, and from such doubts come disputes and wars. The system of primogeniture, though so long of being discovered, is, like many other laws long delayed to mankind, exceedingly simple. There are many other instances equally striking of simple alternatives long delayed, while complex substitutes were in use. Nothing can be simpler, for instance, than an absolute alphabetical arrangement of matters; and yet neither the Greeks nor the Romans had any notion of a dictionary or an encyclopedia. What can be simpler than the Arabic numeral system? yet it was not known until the rise of the acute school of practical philosophers from which it takes its name.

became, according to the Irish annals, so important as to found a dynasty. The people governed by his descendants were called Dalriads, and their territory, forming the northern part of the present county of Antrim, became known as Dalriada. When they had passed over in such numbers as to form a considerable colony in Argyle, some of the descendants of Carber thought it worth while to seek their fortunes in the colony, and became governors there over a people who took the name of Dalriads. Thus Erc, who ruled in Irish Dalriada, had at least two sons—some annalists say six—bearing rule in Scotland. The eldest was Loarn More, or the Great Loarn, whose name still lives in the district and marquisate of Lorne. He may be counted the first king of Dalriada, and thence the first king of Scotland—at least it is impossible to carry the thread of even a probable ruling authority, vested in the ancestors of the kings of Scotland, any farther back. His period is the commencement of the sixth century. The year 503 has been stated as the first of his reign. To trace the course of his successors is difficult, since the race brought with them the ways of the Irish monarchies or chiefships, and of many others of the same age, in which there was neither an absolute law of succession nor definite boundaries either of territory or authority. This difficulty has been aggravated by the efforts both of annalists and antiquaries, who have endeavoured to bind the few known facts of the period to the pure hereditary principles which grew in feudal times, or to some other rule of succession which they have attributed to the Irish monarchies. For some such reasons as those just alluded to, no rule of the kind can be found, and we must

be content with the simple facts, which show us several members of the predominant family all holding portions of territory more or less extensive; while one, not always indicated by any established principle of descent, is generally the most powerful, and may be numbered among the kings or chief rulers of Dalriada. So, though his brother Angus possessed Islay, and other relations of Loarn were more or less endowed, it was his youngest brother, Feargus More, or Fergus the Great, who succeeded him as king of Scottish Dalriada. Though, as we have seen, his eldest brother Loarn ruled before him, yet Feargus holds a more conspicuous position as the father of the dynasty, since it was his descendants, and not those of Loarn, who afterwards ruled in Dalriada. It is in him too that the scanty broken traces of genuine history join the full current of the old fabulous conventual history of Scotland. Thus Feargus may be identified with Fergus II.—the fortieth king of Scotland, according to Buchanan and the older historians. This identity has served to show, with singular clearness, the simple manner in which the earlier fabulous race of Scottish kings was invented. A Fergus was still the father of the monarchy, but to carry back the line to a respectable antiquity a preceding Fergus was invented, who reigned more than 300 years before Christ—much about the time when Babylon was taken by Alexander, as Buchanan notices.[1] To fill up the intervening space between the imaginary and the actual Fergus, thirty-eight other monarchs were devised, whose portraits

[1] "Adventum ejus in Albium in ea tempora conjiciunt, quibus Alexander Macedo Babylonem cœpit; tricentesimo tricesimo fere anno ante Christum natum."—Lib. iv.

may now be seen in the picture-gallery of Holyrood.

There is little doubt that, whatever the preceding immigrants may have been, their descendants, Riadha, and the people who followed him, were Christians. They thus at once assume a conspicuous aspect in the misty history of the time, as a people of a higher civilisation than the tribes among whom they went, and as a portion of the all-conquering Christian community. They had not been long settled in Scotland before, as we have seen, they were joined by the great spiritual potentate of their original country, Columba. The reigning monarch of Dalriada at the time of his arrival was Conall—the sixth if we count from Loarn, the fifth if from Feargus. The influence of the mission became conspicuous in the increased power and rank of his successor Aidan. He seized the succession from Duncha, the son of Conall, in a war terminated by a battle called Lero, in which Duncha was slain. If the historian should attempt to decide between the justice of the two causes, and apply such terms to the claimants as rebel or deserter, he must deal with the difficulty of finding that, though the defeated prince was the son of the preceding king, the victor was a nearer hereditary representative, by primogeniture, of their common ancestor Feargus.

Aidan was inaugurated to the throne with sacred sanctions of the most solemn character. He was anointed by the hand of the great missionary, and it was given forth in a picturesque narrative how Columba was constrained to perform this function by the visible coercion of the Almighty. He would, as a mere man, with his predilections in the flesh, have pre-

ferred that Iogen, the brother of Aidan, should mount the throne. In his ecstasy an angel appeared before him, and showed him the crystal book in which were recorded the sacred decrees concerning the succession. The saint, though he there saw Aidan plainly indicated, continued to hold by his own choice; whereon the angel struck him a blow on the side with his fist, the cicatrice of which remained all the days of the holy man's life, to remind him of his rebellion. The angel bade him know by that token that the crystal book was sent to him from above that its behests might be obeyed; and if he still refused to comply, he would receive another blow to remind him of his duty. Three visits by the angel, and three exhibitions of the crystal book, were, we are told, necessary to bend his obstinate spirit. At last he summoned Aidan to Iona to be consecrated, and there, the saint laying his hand upon the head of Aidan, "ordained" him and his posterity to the crown of Dalriada.[1]

The solemn ceremony was accompanied by a prophecy, which curiously associates together the sacred attributes of those early saints and the temporal influence, as members of royal houses, to which they made these attributes subservient. The ambition and talents of Aidan seem to have given the saint some uneasy suspicions that he might aspire to the throne of his relations in Ireland. By his descent from Riadha he belonged to the race of the Hy Nial or principal rulers of Ireland. To these Columba himself had a still closer relationship, so he uttered a prophecy somewhat in these terms:—"Aidan, you and your posterity will be invincible in your throne until they do in-

[1] Adamnan, lib. iii. ch. 5.

justice to me and my race. Recommend, therefore, to your sons, that they also recommend to their descendants, that they may retain their throne by observing the conditions of its settlement; for whenever they lift a hand against me or my relations in Ireland, then shall the blow which I received from the angel on your behalf be converted to a curse on them; the heart of man shall be taken out of them, and their enemies shall triumph over them." A prophecy believed to have been fulfilled in the battle of Moyra.[1]

Within a year after his accession, Aidan justified these prophetic fears by emancipating his territory, coming to be known as Alba, from dependence on the monarchs of Ireland. The tenor of the narrative of this affair is, that a contest arose between Aidan, king of Alba, and Aedh M'Ainmore, king of Ireland, as to the supreme dominion over the Scottish Dalriads. This, with some other matters, was referred to a solemn conference at Drumcat in Ireland, where it was arranged that there should no longer be tribute paid by the Scottish Dalriads to the Irish monarch, but that the colonists were to follow the banner of the parent nation in foreign contests, and each country was to extend mutual hospitality to the inhabitants of the other. It was virtually a declaration of independence, raising the position of the rulers of Alba from tributaries to supreme monarchs.

Aidan pursued the career of an aggrandising monarch in several battles with his neighbours the Picts, the Britons of Strathclyde, and even the terrible Saxons of England. Bede tells in brief terms how he marched southward with a great army, and was defeated by the

[1] Adamnan, lib. iii. ch. 5.

mighty Ethelfrid at a spot now identified as Dalston, near Carlisle. The success cannot have been entirely with the Saxons, since, according to the same authority, Ethelfrid's brother Theobald was slain, with nearly all the detachment under his command. Bede closes his short narrative by saying, that from that war down to his own days no king of the British Scots durst come to make war on the English. In these wars with the barbarians, as Adamnan calls them, Aidan lost two of his sons, a calamity which connects itself with the continued influence of the missionary over the king he had unwillingly consecrated. As the Pope might in later ages have summoned an obedient sovereign, Columba called Aidan and his younger sons to Iona, that the succession of the throne might be adjusted—the elder sons need not come forward, for they were doomed to fall in battle. The saint called Eochad Bhui to his bosom; and Eochad and his race were pronounced by an unalterable decree the future kings of Dalriada or British Scotia. After the good old age of eighty, Aidan died in peace, and Eochad Bhui succeeded him, according to the saint's decree.

Aidan's reign is followed by a mere catalogue of kings or chiefs, with brief allusions to their quarrels, until we come to the fourth in order—until the reign of Donald Brec, which began about the year 637. For a hundred years, while Ireland was riven by the claims and contests of a crowd of petty sovereigns and chiefs, Dalriada seems to have prospered into so compact and powerful a state, that its new ruler, immediately on his accession, contemplated the subjugation of Ireland, or a trial for the chief command there, and he was thus led to his fate in the fulfilment of Columba's pro-

phecy. A certain Congal Claon, representing one of the houses struggling for authority, had killed Subney Mean, the king, or the most powerful among the kings, of the north of Ireland. His successor, Domnal, attacked Congal, and defeated him at the battle of Dun-Reherm. Congal took refuge in Dalriada, and offered his services to his uncle, Donald Brec, king of the Scots, should he pursue the project of trying for empire in Ireland. Donald is said to have collected a large mixed army of Scots, Picts, Strathclyde Britons, even Saxons, which he landed in Ireland in the year 637. He was met by King Domnal at Mach Rath, now known as Moyra, in the county of Down, and there was fought a decisive battle. It is described as lasting for seven days. Any accounts of it that can be depended on are as bare as possible. They say nothing but that the battle was fought and the invading army utterly defeated. In other quarters the affair is related with a fulness and minuteness even less satisfactory to the inquirer than the dry brevity of the authentic chronicles. The victory of Moyra was more than the decision of a mere contest between dynasties. The presence of combatants of a foreign race and tongue made it a victory in a struggle for national independence; and its memory became more significant and important when, after the lapse of centuries, the Saxon returned to enslave the Celt. Its immediate effect was limited to á district in the north, but it grew in fame and importance until it became the Marathon of all Ireland. A world of embitterment from other contests and troubles has nearly obliterated its remembrance in the national heart; but, about the time of the English invasion, the various traditions of

the battle had been drawn into a great epic story, the work of several distinguished bards.[1]

This affair is of interest to Scottish history, chiefly as a testimony to the power which the small colony of a hundred and thirty years earlier had acquired. But such attempts have a moral influence on the country which makes them. It was difficult, even after the conclusion of the Scottish war of independence, to disabuse the ruling class in England of the notion that Scotland was a dependency of the English crown, which had broken loose by mere force. So, there long lingered in the court of the kings of

[1] 'The Banquet of Dun na N-Gedh, and the Battle of Magh Rath, an ancient historical tale, now first published from a manuscript in the library of Trinity College, Dublin, with a translation and notes by John O'Donovan.' Printed for the Irish Archæological Society. The introduction affords a full reference to the meagre accounts of the battle in the authentic chronicle. This work, like Ossian's Poems and the romances of Arthur's Round Table, at once declares itself the work of a period centuries after the story it records, by abundantly introducing the practices of chivalry and the armour and weapons of the Crusaders. It begins with the preparations for a mighty feast to be given by King Domnal, the representative of Nial of the Nine Hostages, to the tributary kings and high ecclesiastics of all Ireland. It happened that, in purveying for this feast, a small treasure of eggs, the meagre food of an ascetic who spent his days chiefly standing breast-deep in the water of the Boyne, were carried off. Terrible portents follow this sacrilege, and things converge in a mysterious manner to the accomplishment of Columba's prophecy. A miraculous change in the character of the dish set before Congal—it was changed from the eggs of a goose to those of a red hen—was interpreted as an intended and inexpiable insult, and he set forth on his fatal mission to his uncle, Donald Brec. There are many incidents quite in character with the chivalrous romances. Among these the most picturesque and exciting recounts the wondrous achievements and equally wondrous courtesy of an erratic youth, who comes in among the princes a wandering stranger like Ivanhoe, and is recognised as the long-lost scion of royalty. The battle is told with tedious distinctness; and over and over again, after the manner of old romances, when everybody appears to be killed on the losing side, the contest breaks out as stubbornly and dubiously as ever.

Scotland a notion that they were entitled to bear rule in Ireland, and this seems to have stimulated the wild project of the Bruce family to establish themselves there.

The immediate effects of the battle were, however, very depressing. Adamnan, the biographer of Columba, was about thirteen years old when it was fought, and naturally connected it with his master's prophecy. He tells how it enfeebled and endangered the state of Dalriada. About fifty years after it happened, the descendants of Loarn were again supreme in Dalriada, and this departure of the sceptre from the descendants of Fergus is connected with Columba's doom.[1]

This change was the most important event in the Dalriada kingdom of the Scots for a long period after the battle of Moyra. There was fighting of course between the rival branches of the family, and other wars with the Picts and Britons; but we have little besides the catalogue of the kings and the names of the battles.[2] In so much warfare we may imagine

[1] Reeves's Adamnan, 200, 201.

[2] Yet it is wonderful to see what history and philosophy, when they set off together with all their apparatus of dignity displayed, can make of such meagre materials. If the reader, after perusing the morsel here offered, desires more of the same sort of literature, he will see at the end where to find it in full abundance.

"Maolduin, the brother of Donal-duin, succeeded him in 665 A.D. Maolduin was a prince of the Fergusian race of Comgal. The Gaelic poet is studious both to enlarge and legalise his reign, by applying to his government, with a *bardic* retrospect to the past and prescience of the future, the epithet of *godlightheach*, signifying *lawfully*, in his language. But the bard, with all his knowledge, has recorded none of the events of the *lawful reign* of Maolduin. Yet the Ulster annals and Tigeruach recount the murder of Domangart, the son of Donal-Breac, in 672 A.D. And the same annals also recite the assassination of Conal, the son of Maolduin, in 675 A.D. These odious deeds mark the savage manners of lawless times. It is apparent, however, that they were accomplished by the fell dagger of family feuds. Between the Fergusian races of Comgal and Gauran there existed a continual-compe-

any amount of heroism and generalship to have been displayed; but it is the old story so exquisitely put by Horace of the heroes before Agamemnon's day, who have passed away into oblivion, all

tition for pre-eminence; and Maolduin, the reigning king, who was of the Comgal race, may have contributed to the death of Domangart, the son of Donal-Breac, who was of the race of Gauran. Revenge prompted the family of Domangart to retaliate on Conal, the son of Maolduin. By these terrible actions the two Fergusian families weakened each other, and gave an ascendancy to the rival race of Loarn, which they did not fail to assume.

"Ferchar-*fada*, who derived the epithet *tall* from his personal qualities, seized the sceptre of Maolduin, upon his death, amidst those bloody scenes. Ferchar was certainly of the family of Loarn, as the name seems to intimate; but he was probably the grandson rather than the son of Ferchar, who died in 637 A.D. The period of four-and-forty years, which elapsed from the demise of the one to the accession of the other, seems to carry that probability up to fact. The dirk of the rival races continued ready, at the call of competition, to execute any purpose of ambition or motive of revenge. Donal, the son of Conal and grandson of Maolduin, who were of the Fergusian race, was assassinated in 695 A.D. Yet such was the vigour or the fortune of Ferchar, that he contiuued to govern an irascible people, amid family competition, during one-and-twenty years; and he died in 702, when his bloody sceptre passed into the rival house.

"To Ferchar succeeded Eocha'-rineval, the son of Domangart, who, as we have seen, was assassinated in 652. It is universally agreed that Eocha', who was remarkable for his Roman nose, was of the house of Fergus, as he was the grandson of Donal-Breac. His reign was certainly short, and it probably was unfortunate. His encroaching spirit prompted him to invade the neighbouring territories of the Britons of Strathcluyd; but he was vigorously repulsed in a bloody conflict on the banks of the Leven. And he had the additional misfortune, in the subsequent year, to have his feeble sceptre seized by a prince of the rival race of Loarn.

"Ainbhcealach, the son of Ferchar-fada, succeeded Eocha' in 705 A.D. The Gaelic bard speaks of the new king as Ainbhcealach-*maith* mhie Fearchair, Ainbhcealach *the good*, the son of Ferchar. He reigned, since he was too good for a savage people and a wretched age, only one year, as the authorities agree, and as probability attests. He was dethroned by his brother Selvach; and he was thus obliged, in 706 A.D., to seek that shelter from the hospitality of Ireland which he appears to have received. The ferocity of Selvach carried the torch through Dunolla, his father's castle, and his brother's residence. At

unwept for want of a minstrel to sound their praises. It would only load a page with unmeaning words and dates to give here the names of the successive kings or chiefs and their regnal years—of the shiftings in the ascendancy from the one to the other branch of the descendants of Erc. It is worth while noting that the rise of the one does not seem to infer the absolute deposition of the other. Each seems always to have held territorial power in the west, and mere ascendancy for the time appears to have been all that either gained over the other. Hence it may have been that, throughout the domestic quarrels among royal persons so conspicuous in the chronicles, there really was quietness enough among the population at large to enable the country to flourish and acquire power, as it certainly did.

Let us stop, however, to look at one of these monarchs, not so much for anything we really know about him, as because the conspicuous figure he cuts in the popular obsolete histories makes a sort of guiding-post

the end of twelve years, Ainbhcealach returned from Ireland with some assistance; but he perished during the year 719 in a gallant struggle for his tarnished sceptre, in the battle of Finglein, a small valley among the mountains of Loarn."—Chalmers's Caledonia, i. 288-90.

The full merits of such an achievement can scarcely be understood without comparing it with the barren materials from which it is spun. The following are the kind of passages in the Irish chronicles which the writer had at his disposal:—

673 Jugulatio Domaingairt mac Domhnail Bric, regis Dalriati.
675 Conal mac Maolduin jugul. Fergus (Ferchar)
Longus viginti duos [*i.e.*, annos regnavit].
678 Interfectis generis Loairn apud Ferrin.
696 Jugulatio Domnaill filii Conaill. Fergus (Ferchar).
697 Ferchar Fada, *i.e.* Longus, mortuus est.
Eochal habens curvam nasum filius Domengarth filii.
Dovenal varii tribus an.
Arimchellac filius Ferchar Longi tredecim annis.

See Ritson's Collection, ii. 50; and compare with O'Connor's Rerum Hiberniarum Scriptores.

to enable the reader to understand where we are in reference to contemporary history. In the year 796, Eocha, or Auchy, the son of Aodhfin, succeeded to the supremacy over the Dalriadic Scots: he was of the line of Fergus, which seems to have been restored or revived. This is the person who appears in the superseded histories as Achaius, the eminent patron of letters and the ally of Charlemagne. That sagacious emperor, who, though utterly uninstructed himself, knew the value of a liberal education, and of the settlement of learned men in his dominions, resolved to establish universities; and, looking round him, found that of all other lands Scotland was the best fitted to supply him with the scholars who might aid in their establishment. He consequently entered into an alliance with Achaius, and as an acknowledgment for the assistance he obtained, he gave Scotsmen the privileges they long afterwards enjoyed in France, and established the celebrated Scots Guard, of whom we shall have to speak some centuries hence. Such is the story of the monkish annalists, in itself improbable, and unsupported by anything in the earlier authorities.[1]

[1] It is believed that there are people who read the fabulous chroniclers, as they are here termed, taking them in their later moderated shape, not without belief. If any such person has gone over the preceding pages, he must feel as if he were reading some account of a new people of whom he never heard before. Reference has already been made to a doctrine which has become prevalent since Mr Grote promulgated it, both by precept and example, in his History of Greece, that the mythical or fabulous part of a nation's history should not be rejected. It has its place in true history. If it be a narrative of things that did not occur, it is at the same time a narrative of things that were believed in, and the current belief of a people is ever an important part of history. The difficulty is to give the fabulous history in such shape as to keep it clear of the real. On this point the historian of Scotland is unusually fortunate. At a period, hundreds of years after that now in hand, it can be told

The reign of Aucha, or Eocha, however, though it must be stripped of associations so illustrious, is perhaps often remembered by gratitude, because it hands us over to a perceptible historical track. It is not very broad, but it is distinct enough to lead us straight on into the age of perceptible events, and is welcome to the investigator somewhat as a clear trodden track is to the benighted wanderer on the waste.

Kenneth, called his grandson, is found ruling over the Picts as well as the Scots in the year 843. It has been attempted, without entire success, to make out that Auchy married a certain Ergusia, daughter of the king of the Picts, and that his grandson thus represented the old Pictish line. This is not an unlikely case; but what is of more importance is, that the countries seem to have been prepared for an easy fusion whenever such an incident afforded the proper opportunity.

We cannot thoroughly understand the significance

how the fabulous histories were composed under strong impulses, arising out of events of great national interest, and, to the time when an account of them can be given as consequent on these events, the account is postponed. The hold which this utterly fabulous history has had upon the world is due to the genius of Buchanan. He stripped it of its grosser absurdities, and his sagacity, as a practical man mingling with the statesmen of his age, enabled him to make what he chose to retain plausible. Amid such an exuberant growth there was a great abundance of choice, even for one who would not flatly contradict the chronicles, and yet had purposes of his own to which they were to be subservient. He was keen not only in his politic, but in his ethical and religious opinions, and he was enabled to bend the whole narrative to the exemplifying of his views without in any way outraging the modesty of nature—on the contrary, the reader was charmed to find a providence working throughout the progress of a brave and primitive people, and rejoiced in the rewards reaped by virtue and humanity, and the punishment as inevitably measured out to vice and cruelty. The grand march of his Latinity —at once the purest and the most expressive that had been written, at least since the days of Justinian—completed an empire over his special field which could not be resisted.

of the ascendancy so acquired by the kings of the Dalriadic race, without realising to ourselves, what is not to be done at once, the high standard of civilisation which separated the Scots of Ireland and Dalriada from the other nations inhabiting the British Isles. It was as yet a waxing civilisation, bringing with it continual increase of political influence. It was naturally enhanced by the insufficiency of the Britons to retain their Roman civilisation, and their consequent lapse into barbarism. We are accustomed to speak of the Roman civilisation, of the Norman which took it up and adapted it to the habits of Christian Europe, and of the later Saxon civilisation, the highest of all. But all associations of recent times are so inconsistent with the notion of deriving civilisation from the Celts of Ireland, as to bring it into the region of the paradoxical. We have no conspicuous memorials of such a social condition, such as the great buildings left by the Romans and the Normans. Celtic civilisation took another and subtler, perhaps a feebler shape. It came out emphatically in dress and decoration. Among Irish relics there are many golden ornaments of exquisitely beautiful and symmetrical pattern. Of the trinkets too, made of jet, glass, ornamental stone, and enamel, the remnants found in later times belong in so preponderating a proportion to Ireland, as to point to the centre of fashion whence they radiated being there. There seems to have been a good deal of what may be called elegant luxury; the great folks, for instance, lay or ecclesiastic, had their carriages and their yachts. Especially the shrines, the ecclesiastical vestments, and all the decorations devoted to religion, were rich and beautiful.

They had manuscripts beautifully written and adorned, which were encased in costly and finely-worked bindings. It is to this honour done to sacred books, of which the finest specimens belong to Ireland, that we may attribute the medieval passion for rich bindings. The book, being of a pious character—possibly written by some illustrious saint—was an eminent relic, and was encased in a distinguished shrine. For the internal as well as the external decoration of their manuscripts the Irish followed a special fashion of art, already referred to as exciting high admiration abroad. It has been associated with the cuttings on the sculptured stones of Scotland, and reasons have been given for holding that as yet no line can be drawn between the very ancient works of this kind in the eastern districts, where the Saxon tongue has been long established, and those found in the west of Scotland and in Ireland. Leaving the question of the origin of these efforts in art as unsolved, it is certain that its higher development was among the Celts of Ireland and western Scotland.[1]

These testimonies to the high social position of the Celts among the tribes frequenting the British Isles are taken by induction from the examination of such memorials as have turned up in recent times. We know from old authorities that these Celts were honoured by their neighbours as a lettered people. Had the Picts possessed but the germ of a literature, the vexatious brawl about the nature of their language would have been spared us. Anglo-Saxon literature had not begun to spread when that of the Scots was supreme, and the Welsh have not been able to carry their liter-

[1] See above, chap. iv.

ature even so far back as that of the Anglo-Saxon. Great men went to Ireland to learn, and become scholars; while wandering scholars from Ireland were received with open arms all over the world.[1] By the Scots writers, whether of Dalriada or Ireland, the Saxons are spoken of without any affectation as barbarians, just as they would have been spoken of by the Romans. From the other side, even in Bede's own patriotic narrative, the sense of inferiority is distinctly apparent. Indeed, he traces one of the greatest contributions towards their civilisation which the Saxons received directly to Iona.

He tells how Oswald, the great king of Northumbria, in the evil days of his early life, sought refuge with his brother and a few followers in Scotland. They became converts to Christianity, and learned something of the humanities in Iona. When Oswald came to his throne, he sent to his old friends for a missionary who might

[1] "In the same year also Ecgfrith, the noble king, was slain in his unfortunate expedition, when he too rashly, against the Lord's will, resolved to make war on the Picts; and his base-born brother afterwards reigned, who for the sake of wisdom had gone to the Scots, that he might increase in learning in a foreign land."—Sermon on the Deposition of St Cuthbert: Thorp's Homilies of the Anglo-Saxon Church, ii. 149.

"Cum vero restitutus esset in regnum Coinualach, venit in provinciam de Hibernia pontifex quidam nomine Agilberctus, natione quidem Gallus, sed tunc legendarum gratia scripturarum in Hibernia non parvo tempore demoratus."—Beda, iii. 7.

When describing the ravages of the plague in Ireland in 664, Bede says many English who had retired thither "vel divinæ lectionis vel continentioris vitæ gratia;" on whom the Scots bestowed hospitality, "libros quoque ad legendum et magisterium gratuitum." Farther, "Erant inter hos duo juvenes magnæ indolis de nobilibus Anglorum, Aedilhun et Ecgberct, quorum prior frater fuit Aediluini, viri æque deo dilecti, qui et ipse ævo sequente Hiberniam gratia legendi adiit, et bene instructus patriam rediit, atque episcopus in provincia Lindissi factus, multo ecclesiam tempore nobilissime rexit."—Beda, iii. 27.

work among his heathen people. The first man sent by them, as we have already seen, was a failure.[1] He seems to have been far too pragmatical and ungenial for missionary duty, and to have felt and shown a haughty intolerance of the barbarism and paganism of which he had to endure the presence in Northumberland. His successor, on his return, was the illustrious Aidan. It was just before the middle of the seventh century that this renowned missionary left the polished circle of educated brethren in Iona and trusted himself among the Saxon barbarians of England. To the vast social change which makes a statement in this shape look so paradoxical, few individual persons contributed more than himself. He planted an Iona at Lindisfarne, which, long after the poor parent brotherhood had fallen to decay, expanded itself into the Bishopric of Durham, or, as some will have it, the Archbishopric of York itself; for of all the Christian missions to England, that of Aidan seems to have taken the firmest root.[2]

[1] See above, p. 295.

[2] Among the rewards which Bede tells us were vouchsafed to Oswald for his piety, one is entirely inexplicable, and looks like a transcriber's mistake. It is in the conclusion of the following passage:—"Hujus igitur Antistitis doctrina Rex Oswald, cum eo cui præerat gente Anglorum institutus, non solum incognita progenitoribus suis regna cœlorum sperare didicit; sed et regna terrarum plusquam ulli majorum suorum, ab eodem uno domino qui fecit cœlum et terram, consecutus est. Denique omnes nationes et provincias Britanniæ, quæ in quatuor linguas, id est, Brittonum, Pictorum, Scottorum, et Anglorum divisæ sunt, in ditione accepit."—Lib. iii. chap. vi. If this carries the meaning on its face, that Oswald ruled not only the hostile Saxon kingdoms, but all the rest of the inhabitants of the island, Picts, Scots, and Britons, it is quite incompatible with all the information we have of the period, and especially with Bede's own account. It is not said that he subjugated all these states, but that he accepted the responsibility of ruling them, much in the same way as a person appointed to an office of high trust and emolument is said to have accepted of the responsibility.

The high civilisation of the Celtic Scots, indeed, was received with a becoming deference all around. The Norsemen, on their plundering expeditions, no doubt set it at naught, like everything else, human or divine, that came in their way. They knew it only as it increased the value of their spoil. But even they, when they settled down as colonists, came under the spell of the humanising influences. It is not the first time in the history of the world that we find, for civilised communities declining and doomed to decay, a respectful admiration on the part of those who have in them the seeds of a higher and stronger civilisation. We see it felt in the Greeks for the Pelasgians, in the Latins for the Etruscans, and especially in the Norsemen themselves for the French as the inheritors of Latin civilisation. In like manner, among the nations around, whether of Teutonic or Celtic origin, the civilisation of the Scots, then a rising and strengthening civilisation, raised them high in rank, and gives us reason to believe that the Picts, instead of mourning the loss of independence, felt their position raised by counting the Dalriadic sovereign as their own too.

These are symptoms that this civilisation had a completeness about it which is perhaps inconsistent with progress. It represented that of some Oriental countries which, when undisturbed by others, have remained long stationary. There appears to have been much form and etiquette, what it is usual now to call conventionalism. There was a rigid principle of nepotism, all ranks, powers, and emoluments dwelling in a limited number of families. We know this from a very instructive feature in the early Irish literature —the fulness of its genealogical information. Its

wonderful articulation, indeed, makes it difficult to believe that it is all thoroughly vouched; but it accompanies so much new information of a kind to be relied on, that we must believe in a foundation for it. This organisation for genealogical information is so complete, that Irish scholars of the present day, when they have to account for any man in an eminent position, whether in church or state, can bring him out in his relationship to other persons also holding eminent positions, as distinctly as one can follow the alliances of the chief families of Britain in the Peerages and other like compilations. No new blood seems to have been admitted into the castes that predominated in church or state. In this the Scots were the very reverse of the people who pressed in upon them, both in Ireland and Dalriada, from Scandinavia. These brought with them no pedigrees; they had nothing but hardihood and strength, and each man was the architect of his own fortunes.[1]

[1] In reference to the sources of information for this portion of the present work, it has to be noticed that amid the ocean of critical and speculative writing about our early history, it says little for the nation's zeal in searching after its true sources, that the best version of the old chronicles should still be that of Father Innes, published in 1729. It is gratifying to the special world which takes interest in such matters, to find that they are to be printed in the collection of Chronicles and Records to be issued under the auspices of the Lord Clerk Register. They are to be edited by William Forbes Skene—a choice in every way auspicious, from that gentleman's accomplishments. He is a Celtic scholar; and though many other persons may boast of a knowledge of Gaelic, they do not, like him, combine it with high qualities as an archæologist. It is now many years since he published his book on the Highlands, which excited the admiration of Macaulay, and others of less fame. Since then we have had from him valuable contributions in the Transactions of the Societies, and among these he has given a series of tracts which are among the most curious and scholarly of the inquiries into the vexed Pictish question.

CHAPTER X.

Narrative to the End of Macbeth's Reign.

THE NORTHERN SEA-ROVERS OR VIKINGS—THEIR MIGRATIONS DATING FAR BACK—THE CAUSE OF THEIR BEING DRIVEN TO WANDER—FLED BEFORE ALL DESPOTIC INFLUENCES—THE ROMANS—CHARLEMAGNE—HAROLD HARFAGER—CHARACTER AND INFLUENCE OF THE VIKINGS—ACHIEVEMENTS IN NAVIGATION—REGNAR LODBROC—ESTABLISH THEMSELVES IN NORTH ENGLAND, THE SCOTTISH ISLES, AND SCOTLAND BEYOND THE MORAY FIRTH—THE NATURE OF THEIR MARINE EMPIRE—THE MAARMORS AND OTHER SUBSIDIARY RULERS—RELATIONS OF THE SCOTS AND SAXON KINGS—INCIDENTS BROUGHT UP IN THE QUESTION OF HOMAGE—LEGENDS OF THE EARLY KINGS—MALCOLM, DUNCAN, AND MACBEDA—POETIC AND REAL HISTORY OF MACBEDA OR MACBETH—INFLUENCE OF HIS REIGN.

ABOUT this time a movement affecting all Europe had reached the climax of its influence on Scotland. This was the migration of the northern sea-rovers who so tormented the coast population of England, Scotland, and Ireland. They might have been mentioned even earlier in chronological order, but it was about the time of the union of the Picts and the Scots that their influence became large and effective. They have been assailed by many names, somewhat of the vituperative order—as northern pirates, sea-robbers, and the like. To such terms there would be no objec-

tion, but for the element of confusion with the fashions and speech of modern times which is apt to attend them. A Norse rover, and a pirate of last century hung in chains at Rotherhithe, are as different beings as an Oriental monarch who levies contributions on all strangers coming within his power is different from a London footpad. The one is acting up to the principle of the government of his state—not a good principle, it may be—and takes his place as a statesman with a policy; the other is at variance with the institutions of the state, and amenable to its vengeance. And though it might be dangerous to admit that there can be political conditions which justify a people in recourse to depredation, those of the nations north of the Elbe certainly had as good a claim as any other that can be set up, on such a justification. Another name by which they are known—the Vikings—is supposed to endow them with royal honours. It is a descriptive title, however, of far humbler origin, intended to design them as frequenters of Vics or narrow inlets of the sea, such as the lochs of Argyleshire or the Southampton Water.[1] They had, besides, common national names. The earlier swarms were called Saxons, the latter Danes, although they came from

[1] Mr Robertson, in his Scotland under her Early Kings, i. 22, explains this very clearly—"The name has no connection with king, being derived from vic, a bay—vicing, baysman. By northern law every freeman was bound to be enrolled in a *hafn*, and to contribute towards building and manning a ship for the royal service, the office of *styresman* being always hereditary in the family of an *Odal bonder*. Thus the royal ship, authorised to kill, burn, and destroy in lawful warfare, sailed from the *hafn*, while the rover on his own account, stigmatised in 'degenerate days' as a pirate, put off from the vic or open bay. He was as little likely to sail from a royal *hafn* as a Highland chieftan bent upon a *creagh* to issue from the royal castle of Inverness—hence perhaps the name."

countries far beyond Jutland and the Cimbric Chersonese—indeed, from all the seaboard north of the Elbe. "The Danes" is the name by which they have left their broadest mark both in history and tradition, and is thus sometimes the most convenient for general use.

Their movements were swayed by those of the great Roman empire, first in its expansion and afterwards in its collapse. It is very difficult at this day to realise the iron exactness with which the Roman government enforced conformity with all imperial customs, and the remorseless completeness with which it crushed and extinguished every relic of nationality. This tutelage suited some races, for they were taken care of, and had the privileges of the great Roman people; but such rule drove frantic those who had in them the self-willed spirit of independence, and they moved off before the advancing frontier to any region, however inhospitable, where they might have their own way.

When the conquest of Cæsar brought the empire which he founded fairly across the Rhine, the free Germans had to move northward, with the unpleasant feeling that the conquering Empire was in the fair way of expanding to the Elbe—indeed, of reigning everywhere, without a spot being left for freedom. They saw the greater part of Britain annexed and Romanised, and the legions were pushing through the countries of central Germany, represented by Westphalia at the eastern and Bavaria at the western end. The subtle tyrants were employing the courage and strength of the Germans themselves for the destruction of their fellow-countrymen in those well-drilled bands of allies incorporated into the Roman armies. Here, as, to be sure,

in all the elements of the Roman apparatus for conquest and dominion, there were sources of danger and reaction, for they were training men who, if they failed to become affectionate citizens, might be the more formidable as enemies; and we have seen already how the organisation of the Roman camp had to be altered on account of the risk of disaffection among the allies.[1]

Whether from such teaching, or from other sources, the northern nations were acquiring the capacity of disciplining armies, and also that of politically combining for an organised defence of the common cause. In the time of Germanicus—a generation before that of Agricola—we get an interesting glimpse of the German nations, threatened both with the military power of the Empire and its seductive influence. Among those who afterwards fought most bitterly for northern independence were some who had been enjoying Roman honours and official emoluments, and who, of course, were charged with treachery and ingratitude. The great Arminius himself was a Roman knight, and seems to have been received as a man of position and fashion by the fastidious society of the city itself. In fact, throughout Germany northward to the Elbe, the local

[1] See p. 79. Tacitus tells a characteristic story, spoken to also by Dio, how, while Agricola's army was in Scotland, a cohort of Usipians, inhabitants of the right bank of the lower Rhine, killed their centurion and the Roman soldiers mixed with them to help in bringing them into, and keeping them in, discipline; and how they next seized three of the Roman transport-galleys and put to sea. They encountered terrible hardships —those who survived having lived on their comrades selected by lot to be eaten. After being long tossed about, they were driven ashore somewhere in Frisia. They were taken as slaves, and, passing on by the course of trade—*mutatione mentium*, as Tacitus says—found their way into the more civilised regions near the Rhine, where their adventures made a great sensation.

magnates were, one after the other, endowed with some Roman title or other compliment. This policy seems only to have deepened the suspicion of the people. At length there came a decisive battle, in which the Germans gave the Romans a signal defeat somewhere on the slopes of the range of hills which form the Thuringian and Harz forests. The German leader, Arminius, has been identified by the Germans with their traditional Herman, and deified as the great national liberator—the hero who not only stopped the progress of imperial despotism, but saved the old German language from adulteration with the Latin.

The preservation of the pure Teutonic tongue is a very distinct and remarkable phenomenon. But as for the liberties, they were best kept for those who fled from Germany, and have, indeed, their fullest development among ourselves, who have not scorned to employ the Latin to help our language for purposes both of use and ornament. Internal tyrannies, in fact, arose from time to time; and as each was felt in its turn, the less easily disciplined of the people sought homes beyond the influence of the new power. This process of redistribution among populations got a strong impulse when the Empire re-arose within Germany itself through the career of Charlemagne. His bitter and bloody wars with "the Saxons," as they were called, drove them northward in crowds. The result was among the most distinct of all historical phenomena. Fugitives among barren rocks and swamps, the sea was yet before them, if they had enterprise and hardihood enough to seek a living there. These qualities they possessed in eminent degree. To the sea, then, they took, and with such effect as to let all the world hear of them. There

is a legend of Charlemagne weeping when he saw the white sails of the plunderers not long before his death, as divining the misery that lay in store for cultivated Europe, and conscious that his own hard use of his enormous power had done it.

We have just come to the period when the tide, so forced loose by the conquests of Charlemagne, was in full flow over civilised Europe. The aggrandising spirit of Charlemagne's government, however, was infectious; and for centuries, at intervals, some northern potentate was ever making to himself a "strong central government," and at the same time driving forth a new swarm of marauders to live upon the ocean, or settle somewhere by a violent seizure of territory. Scarcely inferior to the pressure outwards by the aggrandisement of Charlemagne, was that caused by the conquests and strong government of Harold Harfager, king of Norway, at the beginning of the tenth century. Many of the refugees sought a footing in England and Scotland, but these countries were becoming sufficiently peopled for their available resources; and a large body, consisting in considerable proportion of that well-off landed class who might be called the aristocracy, sailed as far as Iceland, and actually settled down as a powerful colony on the barren pastures there.

These hardy headstrong races were as well adapted to the pursuits of peaceful industry as to those of war and rapine, which, indeed, they took to more from necessity than from taste. Though not pliant to authority, they had a great capacity for assimilation to the conditions of a higher civilisation than their own; and when settling down in a strange soil was their object, they generally made themselves its most valuable inhabitants.

On this it is sufficient to point to the Norman colony in France.

The prominent characteristics of their career are well exemplified in British history. On the breaking-up of the Empire they poured into Britain as into the other outlying provinces deserted by the imperial authorities. When after centuries these wild Saxons, as they were all called, had come under a system of government, and become in a measure an orderly Christian people, the conquests of Charlemagne drove down upon them the "Danes," a set of wild heathens, such as they themselves had been three hundred years earlier. Some two hundred years later, when these Danes were incorporated with them in a common civilisation, another tribe, still of the same race, though they had become signally unlike the type of the sea-rover of old, pressed heavily on the Saxon population of England, and drove many of them across the border to find freedom in Scotland. Through many vicissitudes the old spirit survived until times almost recent. In the seventeenth century the descendants of the same race, feeling the pressure of an arbitrary government—of one that, at all events, they did not like—began to move away over the Atlantic, where they founded the New England States, and would have laid down a larger original contribution to the population of the United States, had not the breaking-out of the civil war given them work, and the expectation of getting their own way, at home.

As the political position of these people was unparalleled in history, so were their pursuits. Under such conditions, their social life—the way in which they set up their abodes—was naturally also anomalous. It assumed two opposite characters. There was that of

the free marauder, and that of the colonist settling down, probably with a capital raised by his success in plundering. This class naturally chose the districts that gave the best opportunities for industry and intelligent activity; and in this they were, as we shall have to see, eminently successful.

While in their marauding phase their aims were quite different. The two things they wanted were, access to the sea and inaccessibility on shore. Hence their places of abode were in the fiords and islands of Norway, the swamps at the mouth of the Elbe, the islands lining the coast of Scotland from Shetland and Orkney to Arran, and the narrow lochs of the West Highlands.

It was nothing that they lived in sterility when the fruitful world at large was their garden. Then the water was their highway, and it was by having an open sea between them that they were each other's neighbours. Upon the land they turned their back; their power and their business were on the water. To the Viking, whose vessel was anchored in some rocky recess in the Firth of Clyde, Dublin, Shetland, and Norway were nearer than Edinburgh or Stirling. Hence we find something like a compact empire or state, with its elements scattered apart in distant places in a manner which one can hardly, with the existing governments of the world in view, reconcile with compactness. But as the seaport towns are united with a country by the intervening land which is under the same rule, so were the resorts of the Norsemen, though scattered on the edges of separated tracts of land, brought into unity by the common sea that washed the shores of all. Some seaboards thus more naturally belonged to these lords of the ocean than to the closely-adjoining territory.

Hence it was that the Shetland and Northern Isles, and even a great part of the north of Scotland, came in hand more naturally to the monarch ruling in Norway than to the King of Scots; so also we shall find that at one time a considerable body of the Norsemen in Scotland were ruled from Dublin, which seems to have been a convenient capital or seat of government.

The method of their visitations was sudden and terrible. The white sails swept their light vessels in like a flight of sea-birds; and when these were secured, the crews rushed on shore, and, bearing away the commodities alike most portable and valuable, were off again before the inhabitants had time to gather—unless, indeed, the invaders were strong enough to give battle, and then there was of course a bloody contest. On one occasion, as we shall see, they dragged their vessels over the flat neck of land at Tarbet, in Argyleshire, so that they might have the run of Loch Lomond, where their sea-boats must have created as much astonishment among the agriculturists of the Lennox as if they had fallen from the clouds. Religious houses were favourite game to them—they were pretty sure of finding in such places wealth to an amount far out of proportion with the means of defence.

We find in the Celtic annals that these unwelcome visitors are first called the White Strangers (Fingall), and afterwards the Black Strangers (Dugall). The former term no doubt applied to the fairness of their complexion and hair. This was conspicuous wherever they went. Its possession in this purity was indeed a mark of proper caste. The Northman's hatred and horror of anything like colour seems to have been a feeling far deeper than any modern prejudice

of the same kind, whether European or American, since it came of a religious source—darkness being a practical contradiction of all claim of descent from the fair-haired and pure-blooded gods.[1] The other term, Black Strangers, must have had a casual origin. These dreaded visitors stood under scandal with the polished Celts and Saxons of being careless in their ablutions, and apt to carry with them a tarry atmosphere. The trousers besmeared with tar were among the reproaches thrown on the great Regnar Lodbroc himself by his refined captors. Perhaps, how-

[1] On the prejudice against darker-skinned races an authority on Scandinavian matters says:—"Balder, the fairest of all the gods, beamed with a golden beauty; and from his fair face the whitest of all the wild-flowers took its name. Sif, Idun, and Gerd, the fairest of the goddesses, fill earth and air and sky with the dazzling whiteness of their necks and arms; and the light elves, the fairy children of warmth and light, were fair of face and features, while their unhappy brethren, the dark elves, swarthy of hue, were condemned to darkness in the bowels of the earth. So, too, in the Rigsmal, that venerable song of the *Edda*, which describes the various ranks of men. The ancestress of the races of nobles has golden hair, beaming brows, and a neck whiter than the driven snow. Her son Jarl (Earl) has light hair, glowing cheeks, and grey eyes, flashing like those of a snake; he wins and woos Erna, a maiden tall and free and fair. In a word, every man, as a general rule, who claimed to be well-born and handsome, must have fair, or at least brown, hair. Black hair and a dark skin, and especially black eyes, passed for ugly, for they were the mark of an alien race, and aliens in an early stage of society are hated and despised. So, in the same poem, the outward appearance of the slave is thus contrasted with that of the noble and free. 'Black and ugly they are: their forefather, Thrall, had a broad face, bent back, long heels, blistered hands, stiff slow joints, and clumsy fingers. His wife, Thy, is bandy-legged, flat-nosed, and her arms are brown with toiling in the sun. Their children are like them.' 'Be a slave, black and bad,' was a common curse; and it could not be otherwise, for the freeman thought that with the loss of freedom was coupled the loss of all that was noble and beautiful in human nature, and he instinctively associated the ideas of beauty with himself and his order, and transferred those of blackness and badness to the aliens, of whose persons he was continually becoming master by the power of his spear and sword."—The Norsemen in Iceland, by G. W. Dasent; Oxford Essays, 1858, p. 170.

ever, the attribute of black may have had a more dignified origin. The Norsemen were the earliest people in modern Europe to encase the body in iron armour. At how early a period they may have done so is not known. Its form was chain-linked or ring mail, and such a covering would always be dark; even were the wearers as zealous for appearances as their descendants of crusading times, they could not burnish their chain armour.

These Norsemen must have been thorough seamen, with great capacity in handling their vessels. It is to be regretted that for the sake of the history of arts and inventions we have not a fuller knowledge of the details of their craft, and of the method of handling them. Their achievements in navigation were on a scale quite unknown in the old world. Whether or not it shall be proved that America was the Vinland of their sagas, and they were the first Europeans to visit the temperate lands on the other side of the Atlantic, their unquestioned feats on the ocean showed a wonderful command of seamanship. They quickly found their way into the Mediterranean, and they were known on every European coast from Iceland to Constantinople—in the more fruitful lands it was with a bitter knowledge. Their rapid movements directly across wide stormy oceans show a start in seamanship, passing at once beyond the capacity of the earlier navigators who crept along the shore. The ordinary galleys were adapted to the Mediterranean, where they were used down to the seventeenth century. They had small square sails, merely to get help from a stern wind. Their chief force of propulsion was from rowers, who, when the vessel was larger than a boat, were ranged in benches along

the sides. In the celebrated triremes there were three benches of rowers, one above the other, on either side. It has been a great question whether each man on each bench handled an oar alone, in which case there would be three lengths of oars; or whether a long oar passed over each bench, and was worked by three men pulling together. The probability leans decidedly to this latter method. The object of the three benches was to obtain height, and the longest oars would be beyond the power of single rowers to pull—otherwise one bench, the highest of all, would have sufficed, and the other two could only create unnecessary risk of confusion in requiring three rows of men each to pull his separate oar. This was the most that the old system could do to make seaworthy vessels, but the best of them required to hug the shore. The succession of ingenious devices which were completed in the modern rig for sailing vessels, is unrecorded in its earlier stages; but it must be believed that the Danes, when they performed, as they did times without number, the feat of sailing from the place of retreat straight across a stormy ocean, and pouncing unexpectedly on the opposite shore, had advanced far on in the rigging and handling of sailing vessels.[1]

[1] It is provoking to find the chronicles, filled as they are with accounts of these descents, leaving little or nothing from which one can pick up details about the seafaring habits of the Vikings. A considerable event in English history points to a distinction, the nature of which, however, can only be inferred or guessed at. It is recorded that King Alfred built vessels with which he beat off the Danes. Selden, in his Mare Clausum (ii. 10), professes to give an account of these vessels from a Saxon MS., of which he gives a facsimile and a translation. It is expressly said that they were of a different build from the enemy's ships—*Nec ad formam sive Frisicam sive Danicam fabricata;* they were twice as long, and while they drew but a small depth of water stood high-decked. They had some of them sixty rowers, others more. These were clearly vessels unfit to live in a high sea, and they appear to have been a recurrence to the

We find the attacks of the northern ships one of the established troubles of the Empire on the occasion already mentioned, when Carausius was sent to protect the coasts, and acquired so much local power that he set up as Emperor. The exigency, and the provision for meeting it, made a new imperial office and

model of the old galley, possibly improved in the Mediterranean since the days of the Romans. They were effectual, however, for the protection of the coast; and against the light craft of their enemies one could easily believe them effective in the isthmus of the Thames, at Southampton, and in the Bristol Channel. It seems to have been an instance of a distinction which holds in the present day—large heavy-armed vessels for coast defences, but for attack small light craft, which can pounce speedily on their prey, and show their heels when necessary. On the armorial achievements of the house of Argyle, as well as of many of the other western families descended from the Norse settlers, the galley is conspicuous. It is generally, of course, the conventional galley of the heralds, with its centre mast and row of shields or timber screens for the protection of the rowers. On some of the old sculptured stones, however, considered in the Unrecorded Ages (chap. iv.), there are representations of galleys bearing a very complicated mass of rigging: the question is, How old these can be shown to be?

Cæsar gives an account of a naval battle with the Veneti of Gaul. It could scarcely be brought to bear on the present topic, unless we could show that these Veneti were of the same race as the Norsemen of later days; but it is instructive as an instance where the Romans found disagreeable specialties in encountering vessels built for service in the German Ocean, and not according to the Mediterranean model. They were so strongly built that propelling the beaks of the Roman galleys against them had no impression, and they were so high above the water that even such erections as the Romans could raise on their own decks did not admit of a fair level fight. The missiles of the Romans had to be shot upwards, and were powerless, while the enemy had complete command of their decks. These vessels had sails of leather, because, as Cæsar conjectures, the usual linen sails would not stand the storms they had to weather; and he found that in winds they could be handled so as to take up any position. His fleet had a weapon on board which was all-powerful against them—long poles with scythes, by which the Roman sailors cut the enemy's rigging, so that the vessels lay helpless; but had not a sudden calm come, Cæsar seems to admit that this tactic could not have been carried out.

Another affair of Cæsar's has sometimes been referred to as a compliment to the British shipbuilding of his day, but it hardly admits of such

command in the Roman service—that of Count of the Saxon Shore.[1] He and others who attempted to set up imperial power at a distance from Rome were said to have encouraged and hired those sturdy northern warriors, and to have shown them the way to the parts of the Empire which they afterwards infested. It is certain that droves of them came over centuries before the Hengest and Horsa of the stories, if they were not indeed the actual large-boned, red-haired men whom Agricola described to his son-in-law.[2]

It was not until the year 795 that the Norsemen

interpretation. In the civil war in Spain the crossing of the river Guadiana was a great object. He got boats made, the skeleton of wood and the sides with wattles covered with hide, after the example he had seen in Britain—*cujus generis eum superioribus annis usus Britanniæ docuerat*—and with these he was able to carry his troops across the river: it was a hint taken from the coracle or portable boat of the natives of Britain.—De Bello Civile, i. 54.

[1] In the Notitia Imperii, among the "comites rei militaris" for the district, was one set down as "Littoris Saxonici per Britannias."

[2] A great living Norse authority says:—"We are accustomed to view the descent upon Kent by the Jutes and Frisians in 428—now universally admitted to be the right date—as the first appearance of the Northern Saxon and German tribes in England. But this is a mere error. Besides the emperors in Britain, Tetricus and Carausius, who were both of them probably of 'barbarian' birth, and who would doubtless introduce numbers of their landsmen, Marcomanni were established in England by Marcus Antoninus (between 276 and 282), Alamanni under Crocus by Constantine in 306, Bucinobantes (an Almanine clan) under Fraomarius by Valentinian about 372, and others. And these were not mere birds of passage—roving regiments, as in our times: they were limitanean soldiers, guards of the march, legionary colonists settled on the Laetic (public) lands, and training their children to defend their homes and the legionary banner. . . .

"But besides all these military 'barbarians' introduced into England by the emperors themselves, there were, from an early period, local settlements of Scando-Teutonic origin. Not to speak of the far older Belgæ spoken of by Cæsar, as early as the end of the second and beginning of the third century, the various barbarian tribes or bands known under the mythic name Saxons (as all Europeans are called Franks in the East) had become so harassing to the Roman power in England, at least from Bar-

struck a blow in Scotland so remarkable as to be noticed by the older chroniclers. The affair showed that they understood their business, if that lay in the selection of the spot where much wealth was accessible to their vessels, and ill defended. They plundered the monastery of Iona. There could be no pretence of defence there. The establishment stood, not upon the protection of the arm of flesh, but upon the sanctity conceded to it by the inhabitants of the northern part of Britain, as chief among institutions which had for nearly three hundred years been spreading and maintaining Christianity in the land. The poor monks must have laid themselves out for the endurance of terrors and sufferings, difficult to be realised, before they would leave the sacred spot; for again and again a descent on Iona is briefly recorded. How these attacks affected the monastery itself, and the Christian Church, will have to be told elsewhere, along with the results of devastating attacks on monastic institutions on the mainland. If we conjecture that these inroads were caused by the pressure of Charlemagne's victories, we must count that they were rather increased than diminished after his death, from the pressure of conquerors nearer home. Harold Harfager was making a monarchy of Norway by subduing or driving out those

chester, in Norfolk, to the neighbourhood of Portsmouth, in Sussex, and in Gaul, where they had effected a strong settlement not far from Bayeux, that a Roman 'Count of the Saxon Shore' was nominated in each land to control them. The 'Saxons' also joined the Picts, Scots, and Attacotti in 364, in North England, and the 'Vecturiones' were with the Attacotti, Dicaledonæ, Picts, and Scots in 368, in that invasion between the two Roman walls which was driven back with such slaughter by Theodosius, who in 369 recovered the debatable ground, and called it Valentia, in honour of Valens, his imperial master."—Stephens's 'Old Northern Runic Monuments;' Copenhagen, 1866; Introduction, 61, 62.

who, as great landowners or otherwise, exercised a territorial power inconsistent with a strong monarchical government; and nearly at the same time Eric and his successor Gorm the Old were doing the same in Denmark; while another Eric, at a later time, followed their example in Sweden. To this double pressure is attributed the impulse to the plundering descents of the Norsemen, which indeed increased with terrifying rapidity over all accessible parts of Britain and Ireland from the middle of the ninth century down into the first quarter of the tenth. There is some confusion, however, and naturally enough, as to the leadership of the plundering parties, arising chiefly from this, that the writers of early brief notices knew little about the leaders, while the later chroniclers, writing after the descendants of the marauders had settled down as established inhabitants of the occupied district, were inclined to give them a respectable origin, and represent them as led by some warlike prince, rather than by an obscure landowner driven by tyranny to seek his fortune abroad by questionable courses.

Regnar Lodbroc is an illustrious name among these leaders. He is evidently not the man who, with the same name, ruled Sweden in the eighth century; and whether he was of royal descent, invading the country as a great leader, or was a new man fighting his way to greatness, is doubtful, and his name is now chiefly remembered by his death-song. It is supposed to contain the utterances of his defiant spirit as he was enduring torture and ignominy in a dungeon in England, and represents him with wild delight revelling in the remembrance of all the scenes of strife and slaughter and cruelty in which he had been a foremost actor.

Whoever composed it, it has been popular as a powerful expression of the spirit that animated these wild sea-warriors.

They established so powerful a colony in Dublin that it became in some measure the governing centre of the scattered bands who were plundering here and settling there. Conspicuous in this colony, while yet in its infancy, was a certain Ingvar or Ivor, who makes his appearance in the later chronicles as a son of Regnar Lodbroc, who had come to the British Isles on a mission to avenge his father's fate. Whatever may have been his parentage, or the object that brought him over, he established a dynasty among the Ostmen, as the northern invaders were called in Ireland, bearing the name of Hy-Ivar in the Irish chronicles. In alliance with Olave the Fair, said to be a relation of the great monarch Harold Harfager, Ivar and other Danish leaders are found at work in the south of Scotland from both sides—up the Firth of Clyde and up the Firth of Forth. They seem to have met with little resistance, and are spoken of as having harassed the country without intermission for the four years from 866 to 870, when they marched southward to join other bands of Danes who were at the same work in England.

Without even so much detail as this, we have far larger general results from the inroads of the Norsemen farther north. Like the others already spoken of, a chief called Ketil Biornson comes out indistinctly as commanding a body who had got the supremacy in the Hebrides, the long stretch of islands off the west of Scotland. It is almost to be questioned if they here dispossessed any previous government or owner-

ship, for the islands were hardly worth looking after, except to persons who, like the new-comers, were independent of fertility in the soil surrounding them, and sought rather such secret inlets in dangerous rocky coasts as might secure their fleets. Whoever had them before, however, these rocky islands became in the new hands a sort of influential state. Shetland and Orkney, too, came into the hands of "the Danes," though we do not know how long the same northern race may have inhabited these islands, which had not been under the direct dominion either of the Pictish or the Scottish rulers. In fact, these islands emerge from obscurity, and appear on the stage of history at this period because Harold Harfager, having secured his empire in Norway, would subdue them also. The inhabitants were partly the descendants of colonists who had passed over at different times from Norway, partly refugees whom Harold's measures for the construction of a strong monarchy had driven out. In either case they were as legitimately his subjects as those inhabitants of Norway itself whom he had brought under his rule by force; and he was determined to make them feel that they were his subjects. In the last quarter of the ninth century he accomplished the annexation, apparently with little trouble. He made the islands what we may call in modern nomenclature an Earldom, as they were to be ruled by a Jarl. Sigurd was the first earl, and his successors ruled the Orkney and Shetland Islands nominally as representatives of the King of Norway, down to the time when transactions to be afterwards dealt with brought them under the crown of Scotland.

The same races that peopled Orkney spread over the

northern mainland, occupying large tracts in Caithness and Sutherland. Earl Sigurd, whether in his zeal for the supremacy of the crown of Norway, or for his own aggrandisement, invaded these districts, in partnership with his countryman, Thorstein Olaveson. Whether they were acquired for the Earl of Orkney, or for his master Harold, they were, at all events for a time, not under the rule of the King of Scots, whose dominions were thus bounded on the north by the line of lakes running from Inverness to Fort-William. The Danes or Norsemen in England pressed hard upon the southern border, and the west was occasionally swept by the Vikings, who had taken up their home in Ireland and in the Hebrides. Such was the new element, working out changes in the peopling and administration of the country, at the time when the Picts and the Scots came together under one ruler.

It is difficult to give them distinctness without risk of error, and it is even hard to decide how far the mark left by these visitors is, on the one hand, the brand of the devastating conqueror; or, on the other hand, the planting among the people then inhabiting Scotland of a high-conditioned race—a race uniting freedom and honesty in spirit with a strong and healthy physical organisation. It was in the north that the inroad preserved its most distinctive character, probably from its weight, as most completely overwhelming the original population, whatever they might be; and though, in the histories, the King of Scots appears to rule the northern end of Britain, the territory beyond Inverness and Fort-William had aggregated in some way round a local magnate, who afterwards appears as a Maarmor. He was not a viceroy of the King of Nor-

way: and if he was in any way at the order of the King of Scotland, he was not an obedient subordinate.

The memorials of those centuries of bloody invasion come down to us in two separate classes of records, which it would be satisfactory to unite if we could. The one set is written;—it is the brief entries of the Norse invasions, to be found in the Irish and Saxon contemporary records, or in the early lives of the saints, and the fuller and exulting narratives of the northern sagas. On the other hand, strewn thickly along the coast from its northern point to the Tweed, are the burial-heaps, containing bones and arms, the hill-forts, and other countless relics of battle, which tradition almost always connects with the cruel "Danes," sometimes assigning those marvellous sculptured stones already spoken of as monuments of the national exultation for the victories gained over them. And this exultation, mixed with expressions of horror and indignation at the cruel deeds of the invaders, will be expressed by a peasantry, whom the ethnologist would probably set down, from historical and physical conditions, as themselves the descendants of the hated Danish pirates.

Resuming the succession of the kings or chief rulers from the point at which the Picts and Scots came under a united government, we have still but a bare list of names and dates, along with a few battles and other events, which, in any records worthy of credit, are told in the briefest and baldest terms. King Kenneth died in 859, and was succeeded by his brother Donald, called the Third, who died in 863. Here one notices in passing that the usual tenor of the chronicles is interrupted by one unviolent death following another. The next king was Constantine, the son of Kenneth,

who, had the laws of hereditary descent been perfected, would have excluded his uncle Donald. The reign of Constantine was signally afflicted by the inroads of the Norsemen just alluded to. He was killed in the year 881, near the Firth of Forth, in one of the conflicts with these invaders. There is some confusion in the subsequent destinies of the throne. Aodh, or Hugh, the brother of Constantine, appears as his immediate successor; but a certain Grig is found wielding the supreme power, without any assigned genealogical title to the crown. The affair is not made much clearer by the chroniclers assigning to him a partner in power named Eoch (not to be confounded with Charlemagne's correspondent). He is already mentioned as a grandson of Kenneth by his daughter, the wife of a king of Strathclyde.[1] To make up for the mystery and penury of such notices, the obsolete historians have made a hero and a favourite of Grig. In their hands he becomes Gregorius Magnus, or Gregory the Great, and in his person restores the true line of Scottish royalty, which had been perverted to serve the claims of powerful collaterals. He is the great hero-king of his age. He drives out the Danes, he humbles England, he conquers Ireland; but his magnanimity will permit him to take no more advantage of his success than to see that these two kingdoms are rightly governed, that they are rid of the northern invaders, and that their sceptres are respectively wielded by the legitimate heir. All this is just about as true as the story of the King of Scotland with five royal companions rowing the barge of King Edgar in the Dee. When the two countries afterwards had their bitter quarrel, such

[1] See above, p. 310.

inventions were the way in which the quarrel was fought in the cloister.[1]

The next king is Donald, called the Fourth, a son of Constantine, of whom we know only that he was killed in battle with the Danes, somewhere apparently between the Forth and Tay. That incursion of the ceaseless enemy was led by an Ivar, a descendant of the same who had established himself at Dublin. He had fastened himself on the soil, and continued to be very troublesome in the early part of the reign of the next king—another Constantine, called the Third, a son of Aodh. Under him, however, the tide seems to have somewhat turned, for the invaders were driven out after what appears to have been a decisive battle.[2]

[1] Withal that it is utter fiction, it is difficult to help admiring the noble simplicity of Buchanan's sketch of Gregorius Magnus. It was inspired with the spirit of that prophetic admonition so utterly forgotten by the people to whom it was addressed—

> "Hæ tibi erunt artes: pacisque imponere morem
> Parcere subjectis et debellare superbos."

The reign of Gregorius winds up thus:—"Hæc fama justitiæ, pacem in reliquum tempus certiorem quam ullus armorum terror potuisset, præstitit. His rebus domi forisque paratis, duodecimo regni anno decessit, non minus justitia et temperantia quam fortitudine clarus; unde merito apud suos Magni, cognomentum est adeptus."

[2] On this occasion the Irish chronicles expand out of their usual brevity; yet their statement does not fit so well into any others of an authentic kind as to adjust the incident to a consecutive narrative of events. Here follows the account of the event, as in the Annals of Ulster, anno 908:—"The gentiles of Locheochaoch left Ireland and went to Alban. The men of Alban, with the assistance of the North Saxons, prepared for them. The gentiles divided themselves into four battles; viz., one by Godfrey Oh'Ivar, another by the two earls, the third by the young lords, and the fourth by Ranall Mac Bioloch, that the Scots did not see. But the Scots overthrew the three they saw, and they had a great slaughter of them about Otter and Gragava. But Ronall gave the onset behind the Scots, that he had the killing of many of them; only that neither king nor thane was lost in the conflict. The night discharged the battle."—Translation by Pinkerton, adopted by Ritson in

A few years later there comes up in the chronicles a counterpart of the conquering magnanimity of Gregory. It is told in the fewest possible words, how, under the reign of Edward the Elder of Saxony, the Scots and their kind, with the Welsh, the Strathclyde Britons, the Northumbrians, and Danish invaders — all his enemies and rivals, in short, as if by common consent —chose Edward for their father and lord.[1]

The next Anglo-Saxon reign is that of Athelstane. The Danes of the Northumbrian kingdom had brought it under the rule of a different line from that of Alfred the Great; but under Athelstane it was attached to the northern Anglo-Saxon kingdom, which thus became large and compact. When they have to record the progress of an aggrandising monarch, the chronicles hardly know where to stop; and so it is briefly told in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, how, in the year 926, "fiery beams appeared in the north part of the sky, and Sitric [of Northumberland] died, and King Athelstane assumed the kingdom of the Northumbrians; and he subjugated all the kings who were in this island: first, Howel, king of the West Welsh; and Constantine, king of the Scots; and Owen, king of Gwent; and Ealdred, son of Ealduf of Bambrough; and with pledge and with oaths they confirmed peace, in the place which is named Eamot, on the fourth of the Ides of July, and renounced every kind of idolatry, and after that departed in peace." There is not a

his Collection, ii. 81. The site of this battle is not mentioned. The later annalists seem to speak of it as an invasion of Danish Northumbria by the Scots, and place it at Cor Bridge on Tyne.—See Robertson's Ancient Kings, i. 58, 59.

[1] Anglo-Saxon Chronicle (924). The titles given in the original to Edward are *Faeder* and *Hlaforde*.

word about contests and victories: and it would even seem from the original as if all these monarchs had wanted an Athelstane as their father, and tendered their allegiance out of their respect for his moral worth and princely generosity.[1] The fighting, indeed, seems to have followed for seven years afterwards. In 923 the same chronicles tell how "in this year King Athelstane went into Scotland, with both a land force and a ship force, and ravaged a great part of it."

These brief memorials, which, in words, carry the supremacy of an English monarch over the north, would have been of no more moment than those which balance his renown in a Gregory the Great or other northern hero, had they stood by themselves. Later events, however, gave an opportunity to the more recent chroniclers to further a political cause by amplifying the brief notices of their predecessors, and putting them into the legal phraseology of their own day, for the purpose of showing when and how the earliest feudal homage was paid to the line of monarchs whose dominions and privileges were possessed by the house of Plantagenet in right of the great Conquest.

The next event of note shows the Scots on the aggressive, and that with considerable emphasis. The only real acquisition made by Athelstane appears to have been Northumbria, and that seems to have dropped away again. He obtained it, as we have seen, on the

[1] A.-S. Chron. In the only one of the three accepted MSS. which contain this passage, the words translated "He subjugated all the kings who were in this island," stand, "Ealle tha cyngas the on thyssum iglande wæron he gewylde."—Rolls edition, i. 199. It is well remarked by Mr Robertson (Early Kings, i. 60), that here, as well as elsewhere, the king of the oldest and most thoroughly Christianised portion of Britain is treated as a pagan, as if the chronicles confounded him with the leaders of the Danes.

death of Sitric. This Sitric was married to a daughter of Edward the Elder and a sister of Athelstane, and it seems to have been from this connection that Athelstane founded something like a hereditary right to Northumberland on Sitric's death. Sitric, however, left sons by a former marriage, and one of these, Olave, strengthened his hands for a dash at his father's old dominion by a marriage with a daughter of Constantine of Scotland. The two laid their heads together, and were joined by another Olave from Dublin, the head of the Irish Ostmen. Thus were the two chief rulers of the Danish colonists and the King of Scots in combination, and they brought in the ruler of the now scarcely distinguishable state of Strathclyde. Athelstane had nearly all England south of the Humber well in hand, Danes as well as Saxons, and he marched a great army into Northumbria, to fight a decisive battle, in the year 937. It went doubtfully with Athelstane for a time, but in the end he was victorious in the great battle of Brunenburgh, where Constantine left his son among many other illustrious dead.[1] It was said that the slaughter was such as had

[1] The sagas and later chronicles are minute about the specialties of the battle, but not to be depended on. We are told of one of the Danish Olaves getting into Athelstane's camp as a harper, but that story is bespoken for Alfred the Great. The Saxon Chronicle is not content to tell such a memorable event in plain prose, but bursts into song. It takes a poetic flight even in translation, as—

"They left behind them
The carcasses to share,
With pallid coat,
The swart raven,
With horned neb,
And him of goodly coat,
The eagle, white behind,
The carrion to devour;
The greedy war-hawk,
And that grey beast,

not before been witnessed since the Saxons landed in England.

Yet we find from it little distinctive result, and the powers much as they were. It has yet to be recorded, nine years later, in 946, that Athelstane's successor reduced all Northumberland under his power; and the Scots gave him oath that they would all that he would.[1] It happens, however, that the year before this we have an entry which the tenor of those we have been dealing with renders still more inexplicable than they are themselves. "Anno 945.—In this year King Eadmond harried over all Cumberland, and gave it all up to Malcolm, king of the Scots, on the condition that he should be his co-operator both on sea and on land." Three years before this, Constantine had retired from his throne, and became abbot of the Culdees at St Andrews—an office, as we shall see, not unworthy of a tired king. It was to his successor, Malcolm, that this strange gift was made. Here again is a brief intimation that might have passed by as unintelligible, whether as a slip of the chronicler or a transcriber's blunder, had not later events and controversies led people to find a deep meaning in it. On the

> The wolf in the weald.
> No slaughter has been greater
> In this island
> Ever yet
> Of folk laid low
> Before this
> By the swords' edges,
> From what books tell us,
> Old chroniclers,
> Since hither from the East,
> Angles and Saxons
> Came to land
> O'er the broad seas."

[1] "Scottas him athas sealdan that hi eall woldon that he wolde."—Rolls ed., 212.

one side, it was held to be a testimony to the absolute vassalage of the King of Scots to the King of England —a vassalage bought with a price:[1] on the other hand, it was held up as a token of the feebleness of the Saxon king, who could not take and keep the territory of Cumbria, and therefore was glad to make a peace-offering of it to his great rival, the King of the Scots; and in this sense it inferred an act of tribute rather than of feudal authority. The results of the former view will come up again; of the latter it need only be said, that it has troubled historians who have tried to find the consequences of the gift in the way in which the King of Scots acted towards the dominions so put into his hands, and have tried in vain. Their attempts have only been perplexed by finding that Fordun and the later annalists, thinking themselves bound to account for the acquisition, did so in their own easy way, naming from time to time the viceroy appointed by the King of Scots to rule Cumberland—Prince Duff at one time, Prince Malcolm at another, and so on.[2]

Having thus to handle a new confusing element, the opportunity may be taken to make some topographical explanations, tending to the general clearing-up of territorial relations. Cumbria, or Cambria, was the name given to the northern territory retained by the Romanised Britons—a territory described as a continuation northward of their Welsh territory. Gradually, however, the name of Strathclyde was given to that portion reaching from the Solway northwards—in fact, the

[1] The words of the chronicle regarding the King of Scotland's engagements are—"On the gerad that he wære his midwyrhta ægther ge on sæ ge on lande."

[2] See Chalmers's Caledonia, i. 350.

portion within modern Scotland. The word Cumbria continued to be frequently used as equivalent to Strathclyde, but about the period of the gift it had come to apply to the English portion only of the old British territory — a portion in which Saxons and Norsemen had successively planted themselves. If what King Edmond handed over to the King of Scots was Strathclyde, he professed to give a territory that was not his own, but was, indeed, naturally lapsing into the other dominions of the King of Scots. Whatever meaning, then, we are to give to the passage in the chronicle, must connect it with the country now known as Cumberland and Westmoreland. Of these territories it can only be said, that at this period, and for long afterwards, they formed the theatre of miscellaneous confused conflicts, in which the Saxons, the Scots, and the Norsemen, in their turn, partake. Over and over again we hear that the district is swept by the Saxon kings' armies; but it did not become a part of England until after the Norman Conquest. Meanwhile, to the King of Scots it was not so much an object of acquisition as the more accessible territory of Northumberland.

Of such an acquisition, however, it was not yet time for the ruler of the Picts and Scots to think. The natural direction of aggrandisement and consolidation must be within the territory of modern Scotland, to the north and to the west of the territories over which he held actual rule. Here he met with no pressure from a monarch greater than himself, as he must if he sought acquisition towards the south. The powers that resisted him were small and isolated, save so far as they might trust for aid to the Ostmen of Ireland, or invaders from far-distant Norway. It is

towards the north and the west, then, that we are to find the kingdom consolidating itself. Although the battle of Nechtans-mere had taught the Saxon rulers not to stretch their power beyond the Tweed, yet a stronger than they had come; and the Norsemen, if they did not hold absolute rule, had the strongest hand from York to the Forth.

Malcolm had much trouble by them elsewhere, and especially from that dubious colony held by a maarmor in the extreme north, sometimes called Moray and sometimes Ross. He was killed in fighting with them at Fetteresso, in the Mearns—a spot which shows that they had marched some hundred and fifty miles forth from their own proper territory. The next kings were Indulf, killed in a battle with the Norsemen; Duf, killed in conflict with a rival claimant; and Culen, who was afterwards slain in a quarrel, rather than a war, with the Strathclyde people.

Kenneth, called the Third, succeeded him in the year 970. His is an eventful reign in the hands of the fabulous historians; but as we go to earlier authorities the picturesque incidents drop off one by one, leaving his reign as bare as that of his predecessors and successors. He had the usual trouble from the Danes; but the battle of Luncarty, in which he gained a signal victory over them, relieving his country from their harassing attacks, must be set down as a recent invention.[1]

[1] The readers of the obsolete histories will recognise it by its chief features. There is an obstinate bloody battle a few miles to the north of Perth. The Scots at last are giving way, and retreating through a narrow pass, when they are met by a peasant named Hay and his two sons, who, armed with nothing but their oxen yokes, stem the retreat, and lead their countrymen on to victory. Since no trace of this story

Another picturesque story of this reign yields, on examination, enough of fact to show how precarious, and how liable to rivalry, even within its assigned bounds, was the power of a king of Scotland in that day. Along the east coast, from the Tay to the Dee, are the districts of old called Angus and Mearns, now the counties of Forfar and Kincardine. These districts were under maarmors; and among these, in historical phraseology, Kenneth "suppressed an insurrection," but, more correctly speaking, he asserted his authority where it had not been acknowledged before. In this affair a young man was slain, whether the son of the Maarmor of the Mearns, or the Maarmor himself, is not clear, as we do not know whether his father was alive. His mother Finella, the daughter of the Maarmor of Angus, was strong enough to avenge his death on the king. She got him, either by force or guile,

is to be found even in Fordun or Wynton, Hector Boece must lie under strong suspicion of having entirely invented it. Perhaps he was tired of the reiterated bald statement that the Danes had again and again landed and plundered, and bethought himself of giving the struggle a shape in which it would tell and be remembered. He was successful. . The story of the Hays has been widely current as what a modern author calls "a touching example of the simple manners of a primitive people." Even George Chalmers seems to have yielded his belief to the very picturesqueness of the story. "The narrative," he says, "of the battle of Loncarty is so artless and so circumstantial, as given in Bellenden's Boece, that there is nothing superior to it for simplicity and minuteness in Lord Berners's Froissart."—Cal., i. 395. Heraldry has embalmed the story in the achievement of the noble family of Errol, held to be the descendants of the stalwart ploughman. He got a gift of as much land as a falcon should fly over without perching, and "the king also assigned three shields or escutcheons for the arms of the family, to intimate that the father and the two sons had been the three fortunate shields of Scotland; and the Earl of Errol bears for a crest a falcon, and his supporters are two men in country habits, holding the yokes of a plough over their shoulders, with this motto, *Serva jugum*, in allusion to their origin."—Douglas's Peerage.

into her stronghold of Fettercairn, and slew him there.[1]

He was succeeded by a Constantine, who, after governing for a few months, was killed by a rival claimant of the throne, Kenneth IV., surnamed Grim, who became king in 994, and was in his turn slain in battle nine years afterwards by Malcolm II., who claimed and gained the kingship as a son of Kenneth III. The intermediate holders were his collateral relations. Malcolm governed for twenty-nine years. He was a warlike king, and did much towards consolidating, and even enlarging, his territory. He was unfortunate at the beginning; for having invaded Northumberland as far as Durham, he was there thoroughly beaten by the army of the earl, commanded by his son Uchtred, who had an array of Scottish heads selected to be stuck on the walls of Durham. A few years afterwards, however (1018), Malcolm made a second effort in the same direction, and gained a victory at Carham, which secured to him, at all events, that boundary of the Tweed which had been aimed at by his predecessors

[1] Not only Hector Boece, but the older and graver chroniclers Fordun and Wyntoun, bring out this affair in a highly theatrical shape. We are to suppose that the victim has been lured in among the avenger's toils. He was led into a tower of the castle "quhilk was theiket with copper, and hewn with mani subtle mouldry of sundry flowers and imageries, the work so curious that it exceeded all the stuff thereof." So says the translator of Boece. In the midst of this tower stood a brazen statue of the king himself, holding in his hand a golden apple studded with gems. "That image," said the Lady Finella, "is set up in honour of thee, to show the world how much I honour my king. The precious apple is intended for a gift for the king, who will honour his poor subject by taking it from the hand of the image." The touching of the apple set agoing certain machinery which discharged a hurdle of arrows into the king's body. The trick is copied from some of those attributed to the Vehmic tribunals. The picturesque district between Fettercairn and the sea is alive with traditions of Finella and her witcheries.

ever since the victory at Dunnechtan. The last that we hear of any separate king or ruler of Strathclyde was one that fought on Malcolm's side in this battle; and presently afterwards the attenuated state is found, without any conflict, absorbed in the Scots king's dominions. These were now pretty well marked off towards the south, as Scotland stood at the time of the great contest with England. It was in the north and west that there were difficulties with small powers hardly to be called independent kingdoms, though not yet forming part of the dominions of the King of Scots. It must have been matter of some satisfaction to find two of the most powerful rulers of these, the Earl of Orkney and the Maarmor of Ross, fighting with, and consequently weakening, each other. Malcolm is said to have gained several mighty victories over the Danes; but these only find a local habitation and a name, along with the usual details, from late and questionable authority.[1]

[1] One of these is in Gamry, in the district of "Buchan," where some skulls built into the wall of the parish church are brought up in stern evidence of the truth of the common narratives of a bloody battle in which the Danes were signally defeated. See Buchan, by the Rev. John B. Pratt, p. 187.

Another of these victories is connected with more distinguished memorials. Fordun gives a brief narrative, which amplifies with repetition by his successors, of how Malcolm, determining to create a great northern bishopric, established its seat where he had gained a notable victory over the Danes, at Mortlach, whence it was removed to Aberdeen by David I. Accordingly, as might be expected, the charter which professes to begin the register of the bishopric makes King Malcolm present this church and certain lands to God, to the blessed Virgin, and all saints, and to Bishop Beyn, to be an episcopal seat. This charter is a forgery. It was not the day when kings of Scotland erected bishoprics offhand. We have here an instance of the provoking practice to be hereafter dealt with, by which history and documents were tampered with for the purposes of carrying into remote antiquity the phraseology and practices of later ages of the Church. If the subsequent Malcolm,

Malcolm appears to have died in 1029, and to have then been succeeded by another Malcolm,—so at least the Danish authorities tell us; but the Scots chronicles give the whole of the period of the united reigns to one Malcolm; and in using any lights they give us, it is necessary to speak of them as one, since there are no means of separating their two reputations. It was the younger Malcolm, however, according to the same authorities, who was the son of Kenneth,—the other, who had the longer reign, being called "Mac Malbrigid Mac Ruairi."[1]

The northern sagas take retribution for the shadowy victories of the Malcolm of our chronicles in similar coin, by representing their mighty King Canute as extending his Saxon kingdom over a great part of Scotland. He was doubtless a very formidable neighbour, and the Saxon Chronicle gives a hint—it can be called little more—that he met King Malcolm on the border, and extracted some humiliating but unkept promise from him.[2] Before closing with King Malcolm, it may be right to say that of old he held high rank as a legislator in virtue of a very compact and systematic

called Canmore, did give over some lands at Mortlach for ecclesiastical purposes, it is the utmost that can be conceded to the antiquity of a royal religious foundation at Mortlach. See the matter discussed in the Preface to the Registrum Aberdonense.

[1] Munch, Chronicle of Man and the Sudreys, p. 46.

[2] The passage is thus rendered in the Rolls edition: "1031.—In this year King Cnut went to Rome; and as soon as he came home he went to Scotland, and the Scots King Malcolm submitted to him, and became his man, but held that only a little while." In only one of the four accepted versions of the original is there anything resembling this—"Her for Cnut cyng to Rome; sona swa he ham com tha for he to Scotland. Scotta cyng eode him on hand weard his mann; ac he that hytle hwill heold." The natural course for Canute, if he had sufficient power, would have been to take possession of Lothian.

code, called the "Leges Malcolmi," now for nearly a century held to be an unquestionable fabrication of a later age than his.[1]

At his death, in 1033, there was no powerful adult collateral to seize on the succession. He is said to have provided for this by putting to death the grandson of Kenneth IV. The charge stands on very faint evidence; and were it not that it adds an item to the long catalogue of royal crimes, the tenuity of the evidence might be regretted, since such a death would help to clear up the tragic mysteries of the next reign.

He was succeeded by his grandson, Duncan. There is little noticeable in his life but its conclusion. He had made vain efforts to extend his frontiers southward through Northumberland, and was engaged in a war with the holders of the northern independent states at his death in the year 1039. The brief memorandum in which that death is recorded by the older authorities has got all that critical genius and learning can do to clear and enlarge it, but it remains where it was. He was slain in "Bothgowan," which is

[1] The first sentence of this short code brings the feudal system into existence by a single regal act, as all the great beneficences of the old romances are performed. The king, having all the land of the country in his hands, disposes of it munificently. In the vernacular version—"He gaif all the land of the kinrik of Scotland till his men, and nocht held till him self bot the kingis dignitie and the Mute Hill in the toun of Scone; and thare all the barouns grantit till him the warde and releve of the aire of quhatsumevir baron dede, to the sustentatioun of the said lord the king." The title prefixed to his laws calls King Malcolm the most victorious king over all the nations of England, Wales, Ireland, and Norway. This is a per contra to the pretensions of the Plantagenet kings to the superiority over Scotland. These laws are printed among the documents counted questionable in the first volume of the Record edition of the Scots Acts, p. 345.

held to be Gaelic for "a smith's hut." The person who slew him, whether with his own hand or not, was Macbeda, the Maarmor of Ross, or of Ross and Moray; the ruler, in short, of the district stretching from the Moray Frith and Loch Ness northwards.[1] The place where the smith's hut stood is said to have been near Elgin. This has not been very distinctly established; but at all events it was near if not actually within the

[1] The variations in the spelling of these old names are pretty profuse, and among them one could have easily selected the name of Macbeth. It seemed, however, that it would really tend to distinctness by keeping clear of a name summoning a story so different from the meagre outline which the genuine materials of history have preserved. We must abandon the grand accessories too as well as the characters. Archæology will not concede to Macbeth a great feudal castle, with its towers and dungeons and long echoing passages. He would have to inhabit a rath —a set of buildings of wood or wattles on the top of a mound, fortified by stakes and earthworks. For dresses, we know that the common tartan of the stage was no more in use than the powdered hair, small-clothes, and laced waistcoat in which Garrick used to burst on the stage after the murder to freeze the audience with horror; yet it would be difficult to find anything more appropriate, and the armour and the heraldic surcoats of the days of the Plantagenets would be as unhistorical as either.

Shakespeare followed the histories he had before him, probably the Chronicle of Holinshed. No man of his age could have helped him to the truth; and in fact it may still be said that, with one admission, Macbeth is no exception to his marvellous power of seizing and giving life to the reality of historical conditions. Bring it down 250 years, and it takes us thoroughly into the life of the feudal court of Scotland. Shakespeare took a like method with King Lear and Hamlet, and he no doubt knew what he was about. There seems, indeed, to be no other way of giving poetry to times we are unacquainted with, except by taking the details from times we know of. It would seem that the mind will not be content with utterly imaginary details,—they must relate to things known to have existed; and if the existences in costume, manners, and otherwise of the time dealt with, are not known, then these must be taken from some other time. Romances about the Franks, the Romanised Britons, the early Saxons, and the like, when they affected an accurate adherence to the details of the period, have generally been failures. Some things in the tragedy of Macbeth are powerfully characteristic to those accustomed to the spirit of past Scottish life and history. Take, for instance, the weird sisters, so grand a contrast to the

territory ruled by Macbeda, and Duncan was there with aggressive designs. The maarmor's wife was Gruach, a granddaughter of Kenneth IV. If there was a grandson of Kenneth killed by Malcolm, this was his sister. But whether or not she had this inheritance of revenge, she was, according to the Scots authorities, the representative of the Kenneth whom the grandfather of Duncan had deprived of his throne and his life.

vulgar grovelling parochial witch of England, and so accurately in keeping with what we know, from criminal trials and otherwise, of the wilder crews frequenting such witchland as Scotland and the Harz can afford. But the key-note of a far higher tone of national feeling is struck in this great tragedy. It has to speak the sorrows of a high-spirited people suffering from the miseries of a great tyranny that is to be endured by them no longer, come of resistance what may; and whether such a thought ever crossed Shakespeare's mind or not, it is certain that the spirit working in the country in the darkest days of the conflict with the Edwards was never better expressed.

"*Malcolm.* Let us seek out some desolate shade, and there
Weep our sad bosoms empty.
Macduff. Let us rather
Hold fast the mortal sword; and, like good men,
Bestride our down-fallen birthdom: Each new morn,
New widows howl; new orphans cry; new sorrows
Strike heaven on the face, that it resounds
As if it felt with Scotland, and yelled out
Like syllable of dolour.

Enter ROSSE.

Macduff. See, who comes here?
Malcolm. My countryman; but yet I know him not.
Macduff. My ever-gentle cousin, welcome hither.
Malcolm. I know him now: God, God, betimes remove
The means that make us strangers!
Rosse. Sir, Amen.
Macduff. Stands Scotland where it did?
Rosse. Alas, poor country;
Almost afraid to know itself! It cannot
Be called our mother, but our grave: where nothing,
But who knows nothing, is once seen to smile;
Where sighs, and groans, and shrieks that rend the air,
Are made, not marked; where violent sorrow seems
A modern ecstasy; the dead man's knell
Is there scarce asked, for who; and good men's lives
Expire before the flowers in their caps,
Dying, or ere they sicken."

Some inquirers have endeavoured to form subtle theories out of the chaos of royal successions we have just gone over. Among these is the principle of alternation, which requires that two collateral families or branches should take the rule by turns. On such a principle the grandson of Malcolm was a usurper; and, presuming that the succession opened to the female side, his death was nothing but the natural consequence of his presumption, and the proper way to restore the true heiress to her own. Without being able to see any absolute rule in its favour, however, the deeds which raised Macbeda and his wife to power were not to appearance much worse than others of their day done for similar ends.[1] However he may have gained his power, he exercised it with good repute, according to the reports nearest to his time. It is among the most curious of the antagonisms that sometimes separate the popular opinion of people of mark from anything positively known about them, that this man, in a manner sacred to splendid infamy, is the first whose name appears in the ecclesiastical records both as a king of Scotland and a benefactor of the Church; and is also the first who, as king of Scotland, is said by the chroniclers to have offered his services to the Bishop of Rome. The ecclesiastical records of St Andrews tell how he and his queen made over certain lands to the Culdees of Lochleven, and there is no such

[1] It has been observed that, in the record of an ecclesiastical gift made by them, Macbeda and his wife are called "Rex et Regina Scotorum." —Registrum Prioratus Sancti Andreæ, p. 114. It is argued that such an entry is peculiar, and indicates that Gruach was a queen in her own right. The inference is supported by what is afterwards told, that when Macbeda was killed, the contest in which he fell was continued in favour of Lulach, the son of Gruach by a previous marriage.

fact on record of any earlier king of Scotland. Of his connection with Rome, it is a question whether he went there himself. The pilgrimage seems to have become fashionable among northern kings, and was taken by Canute and afterwards by Eric of Denmark. That he sent money there, however, was so very notorious as not only to be recorded by the insular authorities, but to be noticed on the Continent as a significant event.[1]

King Duncan had married a sister of Seward, the Earl of Northumberland. At his death he left two sons, both very young, who seem to have sought refuge with their uncle. Nothing is more natural than that a son, when he came to sufficient years, should try to gain his father's throne, and that the earl should help him. Accordingly, we are told that in the year 1054, fifteen years after the death of Duncan, a great army moved northwards to try conclusions with Macbeda. There was a battle near famed Dunsinnane, but it was not conclusive. The war was carried northwards across the Dee, and in Lumphanan, in Aberdeenshire, Macbeda was killed.[2] His death did not quite finish

[1] The contemporary chronicler, Marianus, says, "1050,—Rex Scotiæ Macbethad Romæ argentum pauperibus seminando distribuit." The word *seminando* is supposed to mean that he dispensed the money with his own hand.

[2] In this district, so secluded until but the other day, when a railway was carried through it, there is a large cairn known as Cairnbeth. It is surrounded by memorials of battle, and is close to a great circular mound or rath, such as the fortresses of that age were raised upon. Local tradition is a dangerous guide for historical purposes, because it is, in general, but a clumsy rendering of the latest popular literature concerning what it commemorates. In this instance, however, the fact that the tradition has been isolated from the great current of a literature that has filled the world, and tallies with the older and forgotten authorities, gives it unusual claims on our toleration.

the contest. The genealogical conditions connected with it are not simplified by finding it continued on the side of the slain king by a certain Lulach, whom the chroniclers call a fool, the son of Queen Gruach by a former marriage. He was slain in Strathbogie in the year 1056, and then Malcolm, the son of Duncan, became king. In this revolution it is known that the Norse power in Scotland had great influence, though we cannot get at its sources and character with complete exactness.[1]

The reign of this Macbeda or Macbeth forms a noticeable period in our history. He had a wider dominion than any previous ruler, having command over all the country now known as Scotland, except the Isles and a portion of the Western Highlands. As we have seen, he is the first ruler in Scotland known to have opened communications with Rome, and the first who appears

[1] "There can be no doubt that *Thorfinn*, Earl Sigurd's fourth son, who, like his father, became one of the most powerful princes in those parts, extended also his rule to the Sudreys. The Orkneyinga Saga says so expressly. Outliving his elder brothers, he became the Lord of Orkney and Shetland; Caithness was given him by his maternal grandfather, King Malcolm Mac Malbrigid; and, after the death of Malcolm in 1029, he sustained a successful war with King Malcolm Mac Kenneth, of the southern dynasty, conquered Sutherland and Ross, and made himself lord of Galloway, in the widest sense of this denomination, viz., from Solway to Carrick, where he resided for long periods, and whence he made successful inroads—sometimes on Cumberland, the English possession of Duncan, King Malcolm's grandson and future successor—sometimes upon Ireland, of which he is said to have conquered a part. As lord of Galloway, it was very convenient for Thorfinn, as it is stated, to make frequent expeditions to Ireland and the Sudreys, and he might easily maintain his superiority over at least a part of the latter. It cannot but have contributed greatly to the power of Thorfinn, that in 1040 the famous Macbeth, son of Finnlaich, established himself on the Scottish throne, having killed the above-mentioned Duncan in a battle; we might even take it for granted that Thorfinn lent his aid to his kinsman Macbeth, and was subsequently rewarded with new extensive possessions; indeed Thorfinn,

in ecclesiastical record as a benefactor to the Church. With him, too, ended that mixed or alternative regal succession which, whether it was systematic or followed the law of force, is exceedingly troublesome to the inquirer. Some collateral relation, as we have seen, was generally the successor on the death of a king, instead of his son. In some instances the predominance of the collateral had to be decided by a battle, but in others he seems to have established his influence during the lifetime of the reigning king, and to have had a fixed position in the state as successor to the throne, with the title of Tanist. From Macbeth downwards there is no more of this, but the rule of hereditary succession holds, at all events to the extent that a son, where there is one, succeeds to his father.

Hence this reign is a sort of turning-point in the constitutional history of the Scottish crown. Coming

according to the Orkneyinga Sago, possessed, besides the Sudreys and part of Ireland, not less than nine earldoms in Scotland (most likely Caithness, Sutherland, Ross, Moray, Buchan, Atholl, Lorn, Argyll, Galloway), and it has been all but proved by a modern author, who combines a rare extent of knowledge with no less sagacity, that what is called the dominion of Macbeth in Scotland was in reality the sway or influence exercised by Earl Thorfinn and the Norwegians of Orkney. Afterwards, when Malcolm Ceanmor, the son of Duncan, aided by his relation, Earl Sigurd of Northumberland, vanquished Macbeth (1054), and drove him back towards the north, where at last he was killed in the battle of Lumphanan (1057), Thorfinn likewise seems to have met with no inconsiderable reverses; nay, there is even good reason to believe that he took part in the battle of 1054 (which was fought somewhere in Lothian or Fife), and lost there a son, named Dolgfinn. Seeing that Malcolm, no doubt by means of continual aid from England, was enabled even to crush Macbeth's successor, Lulach of Moray, likewise a relation of Thorfinn, and (1058) to establish himself firmly on the throne, we may infer that Thorfinn shared the fate of his relatives, and was compelled to yield at least his possessions in the south of Scotland. But how far he lost also the Sudreys, or his part thereof, it is impossible to say with anything like certainty."—Munch's Chronicle of Man, p. 46-48.

down from it through the confusion of previous reigns —if reigns they can well be called—we reach an instance where a powerful man manages to get the chief command by means not of an uncommon kind, and we wonder why his reign should be considered so exceptional. The loyal historian of later times, however, going back through the pedigree of the kings of Scotland, finds that the principle of hereditary succession rules until he reaches the name of Macbeda. Here is an exception, and it becomes the more prominent that, on passing over his reign, the father of his successor is found upon the throne. Duncan and his son Malcolm, ancestors of the race that continued to reign, are both found kings of Scotland; but there is one, a stranger to their race, between them. This had to be accounted for, and the easiest way was by treating the intruder as a usurper. The loyal monks of the fifteenth century looked on a usurper with horror. Being so placed in the seat of political infamy, we have, perhaps, the reason why so many strange events, natural and supernatural, came to cluster round the career of Macbeth.[1]

[1] Pinkerton, in the spirit of contradiction and paradox, makes him a martyr to his virtues. "Macbeth seems to have been an able and beneficent prince. The Chronicon Elegiacum represents fertile seasons as attendants of his reign, which Winton confirms. If a king makes fertile seasons, it must be by promoting agriculture, and diffusing among his people the blessings of peace. Had he paid more attention to his own interests, and less to those of his subjects, the crown might have remained in his family; but, neglecting the practice of war, he fell a martyr to his own virtues."—Inquiry, ii. 197. We would almost require to transpose that renowned eulogium on one who

> "Hath borne his faculties so meek—hath been
> So clear in his great office—that his virtues
> Will plead like angels, trumpet-tongued, against
> The deep damnation of his taking off."

On the other hand, it is curious to find another piece of supernatural

diablerie about Macbeth, which had dropped out of the chronicles before Shakespeare's day. Old Wyntoun tells that he was the offspring of the prince of the powers of the air, a son of the devil himself. It is told how, in a wood to which his mother resorted "for the delyte of halesome ayr," she met and became enamoured of a handsome stranger, a man

> "Of bewtè pleasand, and of hycht
> Proportioned wele in all measure
> Of lym and lyth—a fair figure."

On their parting he told his victim in the briefest terms that he was the devil, recommending her not to disturb herself about that;

> "But sayd that her sone suld be
> A man of great state and bownte,
> And na man suld be borne of wyf
> Of power to reve him of his lyfe;
> And of that dede in taknyng,
> He gave his lemman there a ring,
> And bad her that scho should keep that wele,
> And hald for his love that jewele."

Scott, finding this wild legend unappropriated, brought it, with his usual sagacity, into the Lady of the Lake, in the episode beginning—

> "Of Bryan's birth strange tales were told—
> His mother watched a midnight wold."

Wyntoun, who furnishes this new marvel, softens the prophecy of the witches into a dream, and later writers have been glad to accept of this compromise with fable. There is a story, very like the witches' prophecy, told as long ago as the third century about the Emperor Diocletian. In his obscure youth, when sojourning at a tavern in the Hercynian or Harz Forest, he met a Druidess or fortune-teller. There was some bantering between them. She complained of his stinginess, when he told her he would be more liberal when he became emperor. To this she said—"No joking, Diocletian; you shall be emperor when you have slain Aper (Diocletiane, jocare noli; nam imperator eris, cum Aprum occideris)." This was said in the punning or equivocal spirit which has characterised vaticination from the oracles downwards. Aper meant a boar, and Diocletian slew many boars without profit from them. When the Emperor Numerianus was found dead in his tent, Diocletian stabbed *Aper* as the murderer, and then became himself emperor.—Historiæ Augustæ Scriptores, 671. Malicious people said that Diocletian was himself the murderer, and that he slew Aper to conceal the deed. In this view he rehearsed Macbeth killing the guards. See this referred to in connection with the Druids—above, chap. vi.

CHAPTER XI.

Narrative to the End of the Reign of Alexander I.

KING MALCOLM CANMORE—HIS INVESTITURE—EFFECT OF THE NORMAN CONQUEST ON SCOTLAND—SPECIAL CAUSES OF THE CONDITION AND INFLUENCE OF THE NORMANS—THEIR ORGANISING CAPACITY—KING WILLIAM'S ATTACK ON SCOTLAND—THE FEUDAL SYSTEM—ITS INFLUENCE IN AGGREGATING AND BREAKING UP KINGDOMS—THE SYSTEM OF RECORDS—VALUE OF TO HISTORY—INFLUENCE ON POWER AND PROPERTY—HOW ABUSED—MALCOLM CONNECTED WITH THE REPRESENTATIVES OF THE SAXON LINE—POLITICAL EFFECT OF THIS CONNECTION—WAR WITH ENGLAND—DEATH OF MALCOLM AND HIS SON—HIS WIFE, ST MARGARET—HER INAUGURATION IN THE CALENDAR—HER INFLUENCE ON SCOTLAND—KING ALEXANDER—ALLIANCE WITH THE ENGLISH ROYAL FAMILY—TROUBLES IN THE HIGHLANDS—DEATH OF KING ALEXANDER.

MALCOLM the son of Duncan is known as Malcolm III., but still better perhaps by his characteristic name of Canmore, said to come from the Celtic Caenmohr, meaning "great head." If we are to admit the testimony of Wyntoun, this great king was illegitimate—the child of a miller's daughter. He tells, circumstantially, how the gracious Duncan frequented her father's house and made love to the molindinary maiden, and makes his narrative emphatic by noting that the Empress Matilda was thus a descendant of that same

miller.[1] He is the first monarch of whose "coronation" we hear. The ceremony was at Scone, near Perth—a place which had become the centre of royalty, though it hardly had the features which make us call a town a capital. History now becomes precise enough to fix the day of this event as the 25th of April 1057. There is little worth noticing in the early part of his reign, except that he kept up what seems to have been the fixed policy of the kings of Scotland, to press southwards, and made an incursion into Northumberland, which came to nothing. It is a question whether he took for his first wife the widow of Torfin, one of the independent rulers of the north, called Jarl of Caithness, and whether she or some one else was the mother of the Duncan who afterwards succeeded him.[2]

We must now look to alien causes for the influences that henceforth affected the destinies of the country. A power mightier than any internal power in Scotland—mightier than any in England—comes upon the scene. Just nine years after the accession of Malcolm came the Norman conquest of England. Nothing could seem less to concern the present or the future of Scotland than this decision about the succession to the crown of Edward the Confessor. But it was destined to stamp even stronger historic traces on Scotland than on England. There the crisis came at once, and was at once concluded, leaving nothing to look for but the natural results. On Scotland the new influence worked gradually and slowly; it was two hundred years ere the country felt fully the grip of the new force, and then even came but the beginning of the

[1] VI. 16.

[2] Compare Chalmers, i. 422, and Robertson's Early Kings, i. 128.

great contest. It is perhaps from the subtle and gradual nature of its working, that on the side of Scotland we have a better opportunity of studying the true influence and character of Norman aggression than in that country, the face of which became so suddenly changed by one event.

It was no conquest in the sense in which one nation subjects another after the resources of both have been fairly tried in every form of attack and defence, and the one has sunk before the more enduring resources of the other. To the country at large the political results were a surprise. A battle had been fought, but, like many other battles, it seemed to concern only those who were near the centre of affairs, by deciding the succession to the crown. But it was not that the Saxon people had merely got a vigorous, active, rigid king, who to-morrow might be changed for a good, quiet, easy-going successor. The Conquest brought in a matured system of organisation, strong enough to bind the most powerful Saxon earls, and subtle enough to find its way to the poorest homestead. The scattering of garrisons through a conquered country—the promulgation of tyrannical laws—never perhaps spread so instantaneous and so complete a conviction that the people had found a master, as those minute practical inquiries which enabled the Norman government to make an inventory of the material elements of their acquisition in the wonderful record of Doomsday.[1]

[1] "Doomsday is a register of land, of its holders, its extent, its transfer, its resources, its produce, its deprived and present possessors; the stock of tenants, cotters, slaves, and cattle employed upon it. It is at the same time a military register, showing the national capabilities of defence, the position of the defenders, and their relation to the crown; a census of the population; a survey of their means of subsistence, their emoluments,

In aid of whatever qualities he held in common with the Saxon, the Norman brought the spirit and practice of organisation. He had learned this in a great school. He came last from the country which was the representative of Latin civilisation, and of the imperial organisation. No one now believes the story of the Roman laws having been lost until a copy of the Pandects was discovered at the siege of Amalfi. The system lived on through the overthrow of the Empire, as it lives still. There were few perhaps who could put even into the Latin of Justinian's day the subtle doctrines gathered from the disputes and maxims of the Prudentes. But as a powerful instrument of government the system was practised and respected even by those who were the worst enemies of the Empire. It suited the hardy ambitious Normans admirably. They became, in fact, the people on whom the mantle of the old Empire descended. As they naturally fell into its powerful organisation for ruling men, they inherited the spirit of insatiable aggrandisement which the Romans kept to the last. Like them, they comported themselves as the governing race whom all others were to obey, so that their national morality made aggression a virtue in themselves, and resistance a vice in others.

their condition; a topographical and genealogical dictionary of all the great families in England; and a faultless record of real property, its incidences and distribution. From its pages the Conqueror could discover at a glance the state of his revenues—the wealth, the consequence, the natural connection of every personage in his kingdom. As it was the first, so it is the greatest and most perfect experiment which has ever been made by our own or any other people in economic legislation; and history since then, notwithstanding all the appliances, improvements, sciences, and enlightenment of modern times, can point to no achievement like it."—Mr Duffus Hardy, in Preface to Descriptive Catalogue of Materials relating to the History of Great Britain, &c., ii. xxii.

Such neighbours as these opened a new and serious future to Scotland. To the Lowland Scot as well as to the Saxon, indeed, the Norman was what a clever man, highly educated and trained in the great world of politics, is to a man of the same parts who has spent his days in a village. It was no longer that a formidable enemy might arise from time to time, but there was a great system pressed on them by men well capable of giving it all its force—a system which almost required the absorption of their country within the dominions of the Norman. It was not that there was any immediate threat of invasion or immediate pressure of any kind. The Cumbrian and Northumbrian districts lay between Scotland and the domain which the Conqueror had organised and settled, and his Doomsday Book does not extend to the present counties of Durham, Northumberland, Westmoreland, and Cumberland. The influence of the Conquest was, however, as we shall see, immediate in various shapes. For one of these the historical investigator should be thankful, as it makes his work more easy, and its results more complete. To understand the structure and working of isolated institutions, even when there are ample materials to work on, is often a difficult business. With the scanty and confused memorials left of them, it is impossible to get at the real practical influence of the offices and powers which appear to have existed here and there in the confused group of tribes inhabiting Scotland; and the philosophical method of adjusting these things from what is deemed an innate knowledge of human nature, and the habits of barbarous and primitive communities, is not so satisfactory as it used to be. The influence of the Normans infused through the

country by degrees the great feudal usages of the Continent, in the structure of which they had taken an eminent part. The working of these in any one country could not only be in a great measure comprehended by a knowledge of their leading characteristics as practised throughout Europe, but it was their specialty that, down to the minutest transaction, their operation should be articulated, and that articulation should be recorded for future use.

It will serve for our better understanding of these institutions, as they come up practically from time to time, to cast a brief glance at their origin and its causes. When Rome went on in the conquering career which was only to stop when the whole world was under imperial government, all the acquisitions were made, not for the conquerors individually, but for a great corporation. First, it was the Republic that acquired them; but when the Empire grew up this made no alteration on the external policy—the newly-conquered territory belonged to the Imperial city. We see in Roman history, and in all the regulations for the government of Roman provinces, a wakeful jealousy lest private interests should establish a power among them. So nervous was the Republic on this point, that the regulated period for which a proconsul, prætor, or other governor of a province, could hold office, was but one year. Although, under the Empire, the imperial government modified the restriction, the policy was to make frequent changes. The only way in which the victorious generals of the later Empire could attempt to establish a territorial power for themselves, was by competing for the Cæsarship itself.[1]

[1] Looking at modern instances gives clearness to our notions of an

The imperial organisation admitted not of separate governments, either small or large. The possession of estates conferred nothing like the seignorial rights of modern times—not even so much as an English country squire now enjoys. Under the emperor, so far as property was concerned, there were but two classes—the freemen who could hold it, and the slaves who could not. But it was nothing more than property, and the right to hold it carried nothing analogous to the powers of a feudatory.

When the reaction came the conditions were reversed. The Empire was unity, but its assailants were multitudinous. Having no organic centre, each grasped what he could, more or less. The leader in each conquest might have the lion's share, but not everything. So when Odoacer seized on Italy, and Chlodwig secured France for his offspring, each of them would have followers who also were leaders, and had set themselves up as masters in some district of the acquisition. An adjustment between these and the head of all, something like the old clientage of the Romans, would be advantageous to both. It was good for the subordinate ruler to be protected against his neighbours by the head of the state; it was sound policy in the head of the

ancient policy. The British, in fact, is the same as the Roman was on this point, and it will be the better understood from the difficulties there have sometimes been in giving effect to it. Our connection with Hindostan began so modestly in the adventures of a few traders, that we cannot wonder at the prospect of its becoming a mighty empire having escaped the calculations of statesmen. It was but the other day that, after great efforts, it was made part of the Imperial Government. In New Zealand a body of gentlemen sought to establish a state for themselves, buying land from the native chiefs, which they proposed to occupy and rule under some plan of their own devising, but the central government stepped in and superseded them.

state to secure the devotion of the most powerful of his followers. The feudal organisation was subtle and varied in its adaptation to the wants and conditions of different communities; but this simple doctrine of compromise prevailed throughout—a doctrine quite at variance with the stern force which was the ruling spirit of the Roman institutions.[1]

There are always terms in use expressive of the masses of people who are in their right place and performing their proper functions, such as "the respectable citizen," "the loyal subject," and the like. Throughout all Europe, with the growth of the feudal system, arose corresponding terms, which, in the several languages in use, meant faithful persons, or persons who could be trusted. So we have Getreuen, Angetreuen, Antrustiones, and Fideles, whence the term feudal itself. These all, for the possession of their lands, served some lord or superior, who in his turn, perhaps, served some higher lord; and so on in any number of gradations, until the Emperor, King, or other head of the state, was reached. The system became a complete hierarchy, in which every one had his place. For a time, and for a time only, in most of the great Euro-

[1] A conspicuous feature in all European countries, except Spain, is a record of the difference between the Roman and the feudal hold upon the land. We have nothing from the Romans answering to a feudal stronghold or castle, no vestige of a place where a great man lived apart with his family and his servants, ruling over dependants and fortifying himself against enemies. All Roman military works were for the time of war and conquest; when that was over, and the territory annexed to the Empire, they became useless. They were not castles built upon rocks or other inaccessible places, but fortified camps in the most accessible parts of the country, to be occupied by soldiers during the work of subjugation. That completed, the new conquest became part of the Empire; and, as we have seen, the people became incorporated into citizenship with those who were all alike the subjects of the Emperor.

pean states, there were the allodial or simple absolute proprietors of the land. In the territories within the lands of the old Empire they were generally the descendants of those who had been proprietors under the Romans. These had no place in the feudal hierarchy, in which every man's hand was against them; and by degrees they were pressed into the system, having for mere safety to place themselves under the protection of superiors.

Under all these were serfs or villains, bound, they and their descendants, to work the soil, without having any interest in it, save that it must provide them with the means of living, if it was to benefit by their labours. Feudal serfdom has been a proverbial expression for all that is degrading and servile, and yet the great strength of the institution was able to work some beneficent effects even through this its lowest and most abject degree. The northern nations were remorseless in subjecting their captives to personal slavery, and both the Saxons of England and the Lowlanders of Scotland had abundance of thralls. When these were converted into feudal serfs, they ceased to be the personal property of the owner. They were attached to the soil, not the man, and had the germ of personal right in the privilege of remaining there instead of being tossed from market to market like chattels. They were thus, indeed, a part of the great feudal hierarchy; and we find at times that there is no distinct line between them and the villani, liti, læts, and others who appear as the humbler members of the feudal organisation, having been generally drafted into it as the original inhabitants of the territory conquered by the new-comers. In our own as in most other countries their condition and

privileges gradually improved without any distinct measure of emancipation.[1]

To come higher up in the hierarchy, we find it naturally creating new and peculiar forms of power unlike anything Roman. According to the extent of their possessions held of some great monarch, men came to be Herzogs or Dukes, Grafs or Earls, and so on through the several grades or ranks. In this, as in some other countries, the Crown has become the fountain of honour; but in the days of compromise the land carried the title, and there is still at least one peerage of which it is maintained that it can be traced back to a right by tenure, without the interposition of the Crown. Some of the greatest of these intermediate powers arose by degrees out of an influence over land, which never was intended by the monarch to be anything like possession, but rather inferred mere management and control by a person acting as his servant. Thus a district put under the management of a representative of the sovereign, called, on account of his function, Land-Graf, would by degrees grow into a kind of sovereignty called

[1] This is an instance among many, in harsh political institutions, of a germ of goodness in things evil. Perhaps the strongest tax on this pleasant notion was made by M. Auguste Comte, the positivist, when he maintained that the invention of slavery was about the most beneficent discovery for the human race that had ever been made. His way of making good this rather startling proposition was, that converting the captive taken in war to use saved the necessity of slaying him. It did more still: as the captor naturally desired to get what value he could out of his acquisition, the only means by which he could do so in the benighted ante-slavery days was by eating him; and the great master of contradiction and paradox admitted cannibalism to be an evil, even though he must have known that the majority of the civilised world would concur with him. In Comte's view the discovery of slavery was a boon infinitely beyond the greatest mechanical inventions, since it not only gave existence to a new productive power, but was a source of incalculable beneficence in the saving of human life.

a Landgravate. The marches of a great state were always difficult to keep, and when committed to a March or Mark Graf, he was apt to become a potentate under the title Margrave, whence comes the English title Marquis. The Graf, as an officer employed to look after a certain territory, has expression with us in the Sheriff or Shire-graf; and a still humbler relic of it in Scotland is the Grieve, who acts as land-steward or farm-bailiff on an estate or a farm.

New dignities, in their origin at least much humbler than this, sprang from the wide distribution of land among new owners, and its consequently becoming the great fund for the reward of services. Among the Romans the greatest were served by slaves. The slave who took charge of the robes or the horses of an emperor, whatever opportunity he might have for secret influence, was no higher in rank than the slave of the rich freedman. When lands were given for services, however, the reward dignified the function. Hence there arose as considerable potentates the royal Kammerer or chamber-keeper, the Mareschalk, Stahlknecht, or Groom, the Kuchen-meister or master of the kitchen, the Keller-meister or master of the cellar, and the like—officers who so thoroughly engrafted themselves into the notions of a feudal court, that in this country we still have as distinguished offices taken by the first subjects in the realm, that of Lord Chamberlain, Master of the Robes, Master of the Horse, and others.

Such an arrangement not only gave lustre to a throne, but kept the great feudatories near it, and at a distance from the territories where they might be laying the foundation of independent power. There were many inducements to gather round the throne; and the

sovereign, when he noticed a distant feudatory whose local power was dangerous, or a petty prince whom he desired to convert into a feudatory, would confer on either a tempting estate near the capital. We shall see how the possession of such an acquisition affected the relations between England and Scotland. A capital so furnished with distinguished residents became an attraction to others. At an early period Paris became thus seductive, and the general gathering of all the local potentates to that centre of attraction had a large portion among the influences which centralised the power of the French monarch.

When the feudal system was completed in a state, everything must ultimately be held of the monarch. Hence every right acquired over land came, by the nomenclature of the law, through his royal bounty. Through this phraseology monarchs are often spoken of as conferring boons, when in reality they are laying on restrictions. In later times, when the crown really had established a large prerogative, and had much power of giving, it could be said that a monarch wasted the influence and wealth of the crown by profuse and inconsiderate liberality. But in earlier times he was consolidating that power by giving conditionally what he could not withhold. It was again the intervention of the compromise. The sovereign would permit the independent landholder—the squatter, as he would now be called in colonial phraseology—to be the lawful, regular, and acknowledged possessor of the land, provided he would agree to hold it according to feudal form of the crown; and it was just a question of prudence whether this offer should be accepted. The obsolete historians, as we have seen, tell how King

Malcolm, at a great meeting of his chiefs, distributed among them all the rest of the land of Scotland, retaining for himself nothing but the Mute Hill of Scone. Such a scene of course never occurred; but if we should take it as a typical or foreshortened description of the process by which the policy of successive monarchs gradually brought it about that all lands should be deemed the gift of the crown, it was a process of restraint rather than of liberality.

A system so fertile in powers and influences gave great opportunities of aggrandisement to active, able, ambitious men. The feudal system, indeed, is a sort of science of political physiology, by the application of which we can observe how the several states of Europe aggregated themselves together, and became what they have been. A specially interesting illustration of it is found in the relations of England and Scotland, as we shall presently come across them. Nominally at the head of all was still the old Roman Empire—the Empire of the world; though, after Charlemagne's day, it never came together again with its old completeness. The spiritual half of it, as we all know, with a great struggle reasserted its dominion over the Western Empire, and even spread itself over those distant countries of the north which came by degrees within the influence of European civilisation. The political part of the Empire was not strong enough to hinder separate monarchies like France, England, and Castile from growing into independent greatness. The spiritual Empire gave no assistance in keeping down these—in fact, it was its policy sometimes to encourage them, since the champion of the Church in a distant domain might be its servant, or at the highest its ally, but the civil Empire close at hand might become its

master. So it was that the See of Rome established considerable power as an arbiter among states. The dominion of the Empire was nominally over the whole world, and therefore its spirit was that of universal aggression, that it might bring to subjection and loyalty the outlying and unconformable portions of the world. The large independent states which resisted the Empire were no doubt false to the conditions of their own existence in adopting this spirit; but still they did adopt it, and aggrandisement became the tradition of every European power. The way in which the imperial system and the feudal system combined to give the means of aggrandisement to able men was simple enough. Whether it were a large monarchy trying to feudalise a smaller, or a subordinate state which had grown rich and powerful trying to throw off its superior and become independent, a succession of rulers, endowed with activity and ability, if they were not met by like qualities on the other side, would generally effect a good deal. The task of the monarch bringing other states under subjection was easier than that of the feudatory aiming at independence, since at some stage or other he could not easily evade the scandal of disloyalty. One way of working towards the position of lord paramount over a neighbouring state, was by letting its king or ruler hold lands for which he had to do homage as fiefs, and taking all available opportunities to widen the character of this homage, so as to make it extend to his independent dominions. Gifts of land were sometimes made by great sovereigns to their smaller neighbours, evidently with the design of pursuing this policy.

Another method of aggression was to charge the ruler who refused his homage with disloyalty, and to declare

his fief to be forfeited. In general the sovereign who took this course was not in a position to seize and hold the fief for himself, or might be in a position which would make the feudal community cry shame on him if he did so. His policy was to find some one with a feasible claim, likely to be tractable when he got into the vacant fief—a person generally with some power and ability, who required only countenance and assistance to enable him to displace the object of his patron's enmity. The most gracious form which this process could take would be when there were competitors for the crown of the state it was desirable to absorb. The aggressor had then the game in his hands, so far as mere feudal tactics went. He would find, of course, for a competitor who was ready to do him homage as superior, and whose promise he could trust.

We shall see projects of this kind exemplified on a large scale, but the process went down by degrees, and ere the crown of Scotland was consolidated and strengthened, as the term is, it had to squeeze out a number of independent little powers by analogous practices. With the Celts, who loved the patriarchal system, and did not take kindly to the feudal, the process lasted down to the Revolution. Some of the proud little chiefs would not hold by royal charter, or "the sheepskin title," as they called it. The fief would then be forfeited, and transferred generally to some powerful aggrandising house, such as that of Argyle or Gordon. Even in such hands the sheepskin title might not be at once available to secure the loyalty of the clan; but it could be put by, and when the right time came it gave the legitimate influence of the law to the necessary coercion.

It might be supposed, at first thought, that all these

shiftings in the feudal organisation affected the condition and interest solely of princes, and that the people had no portion in them, but to submit to the tyrant whom the chances of a sort of political gambling placed over them. But in the flexibility of the feudal institutions there were some chances for humbler persons. We have seen in a general way what feudalism did for the thralls or personal slaves, and we shall perhaps have to look more closely at what it did both for them and those a degree higher up by means of Municipal Corporations. Then it sometimes happened that he who was the aggressor on a prince was the liberator of that prince's people. When some petty ruler played the tyrant, it would excite a lively alarm in his bosom to hear that some sovereign asserted a claim as lord paramount over him, and was sending justiciars into his dominions to receive the appeals of those who failed to obtain redress in local courts. Those who welcomed such an intrusion, instead of being stained with the ugly colours of disaffection or insurrection, were displaying emphatically the virtue of submission to the powers that be. It is from this practice of sending royal judges to rectify the wrongs of local magnates that the assizes in England and the circuits in Scotland are descended. In fact, there was in the political forces set in motion by feudality an adjusting spirit that in a large measure compensated the apparatus of oppression and aggression which was put at the command of the great lords. Even at the time when the Plantagenets were laying their plans for annexing Scotland, and the king of Scots with more success was bringing the Western Isles and other outlying districts under his sceptre, we shall find a

law coming in which gave the customary holder, or tenant of the ground which his ancestors had held, a remedy against the feudal lord who might eject him—a remedy in the king's court. The humble tiller of the ground was as fully as his lord a member of the feudal hierarchy of which the king was the head; the conditions, indeed, might be more correctly stated by saying, that in the eye of the law the king was the head landlord, without whose consent a tenant could not eject a sub-tenant.

As it was throughout the principle of the feudal hierarchy that the subordinate's enjoyment of any right in land was from the special grace and liberality of his superior or overlord, the distributor of such benefactions was perpetually calling for substantial proofs of the gratitude of the receivers. The feudal taxes—or casualties, as they were called—were proverbial. Sometimes they were rendered in perennial imposts of produce or labour. But there were special casualties which might be said to be due whenever the superior could show a special occasion for money. These came by practice to follow a certain limited catalogue of contingencies—as when the chief married off a daughter, and required a dowry for her; when the heir came of age, or was knighted, and required an establishment, or the like. Then, on the other side, every change in the condition of the fief was taxed. As it was nominally held by the consent of the superior, and really was so in early times, he would not permit the heir to succeed to it without paying a ransom. If the heir were a child who could not do military service, there was a tax generally lasting until his majority; and when an heiress succeeded, she was almost

in the hands of the overlord to make what he could by arranging that an eligible husband should share the fief with her. If the superior would not, without a consideration, permit an heir to enter on possession, still less would he permit the fief to be passed to a stranger; and these exactions, at first sanctioned by the superior's real power, continued on a fixed scale after the law gave a right of property to the vassal.

Military service, however, was the soul of the system in its earlier days. It was manifested in the extent of the warlike assistance which a fief was bound to render —the number of lances which the holder had to send into the field when the overlord went to war, and demanded the array. This was a contribution which the vassals were often delighted to furnish, for they saw sometimes before them a wild congenial life, with prospects of plunder or territorial aggrandisement. Sometimes the readiness to put the foot in the stirrup when there was no obligation of feudal duty would be ungenerously used. In the crusades, or in any other contest where there was room for feats of chivalry, some young aspirant might join his potent neighbour, whose scribes registered the act; and generations afterwards it might be adduced as evidence that he had been under the banner of his lord paramount, and had acknowledged the feudal obligation.

In the aggregation of great states, large proportions of all the services had to be rendered in money. Here the commonalty found a notable element of political power. On so wide a scale, the tribute of each person could not be extracted from him separately. Two obvious processes became necessary, the one the fixing the aggregate amount to be collected all over the com-

munity, the other the adjusting some criterion for the share which each member of that community should contribute. These pieces of business could not be transacted without the meeting of those interested. When a community have once secured the undisturbed right of assembling, everything is gained. The contribution which this right, connected as it was with the power of supply, has made to the promotion of constitutional freedom, is too memorable to require any explanation here. It is alluded to as showing that the feudal system, hard and tyrannical as it has been counted in popular estimation, had elements capable of serving all the purposes of good government. Its machinery was tough and durable, and could not be easily bent to immediate objects, whether of tyranny or anarchy. But once pressed into a special working shape, it could be depended upon, and was not likely to prove treacherous to those it professed to serve. Hence the character of a government arising out of feudal usages depended entirely on the character of the people. If they were slavish, it afforded the means of grinding them to the dust; but if they were self-relying, orderly by nature, and intolerant of bondage and dictation, the feudal system gave them ample means for making good the promise attendant on these great qualities.

An organisation of so many and divers parts, all closely united together, from those which made the constitution of a great empire down to those which regulated the possession of the yeoman's plot of ground, must needs have had many complicated internal arrangements for keeping it in order. As we have seen, under the Empire, with its unity, land was treated like any other possession, so far as it could be so treated.

Whether in portions large or small, it was held by simple ownership; and the owner's power of shifting its condition, so as to create another interest in it, went no farther than the power of letting it out to use on hire, as he might his horse or his chariot. Some one at a distance, owning a power over the land, and over the people dwelling on it, which was neither that of owner nor of hirer, was unknown.

To mark and record those subtle rights which arose before written records came into use, many curious devices and ceremonies were invented. These were generally preserved even after writing came into general use, and a heap of written technicalities were added to the unwritten. The tenacity with which these have held their place through the great revolutions that have rolled over, is one of the most remarkable phenomena in human history. It is in those communities where all the oppressive characteristics of feudality have been most thoroughly driven forth, and where the land itself has been most completely absorbed into the ordinary stock of wealth and commerce, that the feudal usages have been preserved with most pedantic care. The formulas that expressed the fate of empires are still nominally applicable to the commerce in patches of land. The citizen obtaining a site for a villa is recorded as indifferently submitting to that ceremony so memorable in our history, from the great war that followed its demand on the one hand, and its refusal on the other.[1]

[1] Until the other day there might frequently have been seen in Scotland a small ceremony which represented to minute perfection a portion of the solemnities of the old feudal investiture. The Author has a lively recollection of its features, from having occasionally borne a part in it. What rendered it peculiarly fresh as a memorial of obsolete ceremonies

Before the use of writing became general, it was necessary to give great emphasis to the ceremonies connected with feudal rights, for the purpose of securing to them publicity and remembrance. Still of rights and obligations, often so subtle, memory and tradition were a frail and fugitive record. When writing came to the assistance of these, and recorded in indelible terms all the specialties of feudal transactions, it must have appeared that feudalism was rescued from its greatest difficulty and discouragement. But a new danger arose in the facilities for falsification. Where

was, that it had to be transacted in the open air, and upon the land itself, so that its virtues could not be obtained by some mere fiction or presumption recorded as done in an attorney's office, like the act by which homage was done to the superior, or that by which the fief was rendered back into his hands, to be transferred to a new vassal who had bought it. As the preliminaries of the ceremony, let us suppose that the owner of suburban property disposes of a patch of it to some fellow-citizen, who intends there to build a villa. The pecuniary transaction is concluded, and the feu-charter has been prepared, in which the owner of the land, as superior, overlord, lord paramount, or whatever else we may call him, accepts of the purchaser as his vassal, and sets forth the conditions or the form in which the feudal services are to be rendered. These are, perhaps, an annual payment in money, called feu-duty; but if the land has been paid for, cash down, they will be something nominal. The rendering of a peppercorn annually was a favourite form of feudal service or acknowledgment. Now, then, comes the investiture. A small group of men appear on the ground itself. One takes from his pocket the actual feu-charter; he is the attorney or representative of the purchaser or vassal. He hands it to another, and desires him to read from it the precept of sasine, or the direction which the superior therein gives for giving his new vassal seisin, or absolute possession of the land. The receiver of this document—who, like the giver of it, is probably a clerk in the office where the business is transacted—represents the bailie, bailiff, or executive officer, of the superior's seignorial court. He receives the precept of his lord and master with due reverence and obedience. Giving effect to its directions, he would stoop down, and, lifting a stone and a handful of earth, hand these over to the new vassal's attorney, thereby conferring on him "real, actual, and corporal possession" of the fief. The next duty of the purchaser's attorney was what was termed to "take instruments," to enter a solemn protest that his client's infeftment, in-

there were rights affecting property which were never tested by practice, and still more where there were rights of sovereignty which might remain latent among Chancery rolls or the muniments of a religious house —might lie there for centuries, until the opportunity came for giving life to them—the temptations to forgery were enormous, and we cannot wonder that they were irresistible. This was a blight that sometimes ate into the very heart of a nation's proudest institutions. There were always grand seigneurs, whose whole title to their position was questionable, figuring at the court of

feofment, or placing in the fief, was completed, and this he did by handing a piece of money—the canonical sum was a shilling—to a notary public in attendance. This was not the least significant part of the ceremony, as bearing it back into the farthest recesses of the feudal system, when it acted in conjunction with the imperial. The Empire left to its spiritual half the functions of the scribe with the preservation of records. To carry out this function, certified notaries were distributed over Christendom, and divided into districts according to the organisation of the Church. The gentleman who receives the shilling in this instance is a Notary Public of the Holy Roman Empire. His doquet or recorded notandum of the proceedings is written in the language of Rome, and in a country where the establishment is Presbyterian, and the ecclesiastical division is into presbyteries and synods, he designs himself according to the episcopal diocese of the old Romish Church for which he is licensed, as *Diocesis Moraviensis*, or *Diocesis Andreanopolitani, notarius publicus*. We shall find afterwards, at the outbreak of the war of independence, that when Edward I. professed to take possession of Scotland as lord paramount, in order that he might give the crown to the true heir, the facts of the transaction were attested exactly in the same manner by a Notary Public of the Holy Roman Empire.

Should the oddity of this ceremony, as performed by grave respectable-looking men, bring around it a group of spectators, they may well pass for the Pares Curiæ—the council or parliament of vassals attached to the old seignorial court. These, indeed, took a vital part in all investitures. As the co-vassals and brethren-in-arms of the new vassal, they were witnesses to the privileges conferred on him, and the obligations undertaken by him, and in some measures their presence was an announcement of their consent to receive him within their corporation. The ceremony of infeftment on the lands was abolished by Act of Parliament in the year 1847.

France. Sometimes a royal commission would be issued to ransack the records of a province, and cut away all that were spurious, along with the spurious dignities they avouched.

Forgeries such as these came of course to be treated as crimes, but those of a wider aim were in some measure dignified by the greatness of the interests they affected. The churchmen had the monopoly of the pen, and they seem to have been proud that they could use it to momentous ends. Possessing the power thus to influence the political condition of nations, they may have thought it in a manner their duty to exercise it loyally and patriotically.

Though there was often abundant ground of suspicion, it is only at a comparatively late period that archæology has advanced so far in the direction of precision as to apply tests to this class of documents nearly as infallible as those of the chemist. The very features that may have found them favour when the science was in a slovenly condition, have condemned them in the able hands which now wield its powers. The pedantic nicety with which the forgery adapts itself to the usages of some later age, is precisely the evidence which excludes it from the early age addicted to different usages, to which it is attributed that it may serve the purpose of the forger.[1] Even the possession of this high archæological skill has had an influence capable of

[1] The public at large are slow to believe in these detections, because the knowledge which exposes the anachronism is restricted to the adept. But in his hands the means of detection are almost as distinct and flagrant as they would be to any one, if he should find something that professes to be an old newspaper telling how Charles II. went by special train from Dover to London, or how the news of the battle of Culloden was immediately transmitted to Windsor by electric telegraph.

abuse. It has nourished a reverence for charter information. Among those who, like Prynne, think there is "nothing so ravishing as records," there is sometimes an inclination to place absolute reliance on the import of genuine charters. Yet we shall have to meet many instances in which they tell false tales. Whoever had a claim which was disputed, had an interest to have it profusely recorded. Claims which were repudiated yet found their way to the records. Sometimes exemption from a claim or an obligation is recorded when the real difficulty was that it could not be enforced. Every magnate having pretensions to sovereignty kept some cunning clerk in his "chapel of chancery" ever preparing documents which were aptly termed *munimenta*, or fortresses round his master's prerogatives and powers. The churchmen thus gifted did not neglect themselves; the ecclesiastical "chartularies," or collections of title-deeds, are the most perfect in existence.

To those who had to deal with feudal powers and distinctions there were other snares which it required wariness and knowledge to avoid; and in so very subtle and complicated a system those who possessed these qualities had many chances against those who had them not. The doer of homage might render less than he should, or the receiver of it might obtain less than he should. If homage *per paragium*, or homage acknowledging a superiority over a special estate—such homage as might be paid by a greater prince than he who received it—was intended, it was a fatal error to proffer the general homage, which inferred inequality of condition, and brought the giver absolutely under the banner of him who

received it. Even when the homage was limited to a special holding or estate, there was room for a difference. A sovereign might hold a province of another by simple homage, and thus he was the immediate sovereign of the province, with subordination to his superior; or he might hold lands by homage and fealty, and thus was a mere landed proprietor in the district, drawing the rents. The kings of Scots held districts in England in both these ways. These and many subtler distinctions had to be looked to; nor, when all measures of precaution were adopted, could it be prevented that the cunning scribe who recorded the ceremony, without any direct fraud or forgery, should fail to leave a distinct impression of the conditions and exceptions for which the homage-doer stipulated. The chief protection to the independence of states lay in the practice which gradually arose of the great council of the sovereign being a party to all solemn feudal acts performed by him; so that concessions made under incidental difficulties, such as captivity in war, or made by a ruler in pursuance of his own selfish ends and to the detriment of his people, should be ineffective. Still it will easily be seen that the system was one which gave able and unscrupulous men many opportunities for juggling, and for dexterous aggrandisements. With the progress of Christianity princes became ashamed to seize on neighbouring states, like the Romans, just because they could take them. When a robber-power determined to absorb a weaker neighbour, a pretext for the deed had to be found in the feudal usages, just as it has now to be found in the manipulation of diplomatic casuistry; and then, as now, when the power

to do the act of injustice existed, the pretext was not hard to find.

Such was the system now next door to Scotland, and soon, in some form or other, to press upon her peculiar usages, if it did not bring with it far greater peril.

It would be hard to say that the growth of these institutions abroad had not in some measure influenced Scotland as well as the Heptarchy before the coming of the Normans. Some hints taken from the practice of continental Europe may have helped through with that process of aggregation which converted several states into one. We may be sure, however, that there were none of those reserved unexercised rights which proved so perilous to the independence of small states under the new organisation. The King of Scots, we may be certain, had no rights in Pictland or Strathclyde until he reigned there. The terms used by some of the chroniclers might leave the inference that there was something of the nature of a superiority over Ross and the Orkneys; but this seems to have come forth in the phraseology of later writers living amid the practice of the feudal law. It was their natural way of dealing with the fact that kings of Scots made no secret of their intention to possess these districts whenever they could.

As to the internal organisation of the country, it has already been hinted that the gradual entrance on the stage one by one of offices and dignities common to feudal Europe — of chancellors, grand justiciars, chamberlains, secretaries, peers, and bishops—is a relief to the historical inquirer. If he should have courage to deal practically with the native functionaries of an earlier period, he will find little but their uncouth

names to guide him.[1] We may find in the reference to some of these offices faint traces of that pressure of the crown upon local institutions which was at work

[1] It has sometimes occurred to the Author that if those who profess to elucidate these occult corners of history had more dealings with the world than many of them have, they would not profess to turn their work off in so easy and complete a shape as they sometimes do. If one has felt the practical difficulty of the question, whether a certain piece of business should originate with the Treasury or the Board of Trade, or whether some question can be decided in the Court of Chancery, or must go to a common-law court for an issue, he would probably not commit himself to telling as distinctly and fully as the duties of a tide-waiter or a railway guard are given in his printed instructions, the nature of the functions of a Maarmor, a Thane, an Abthane, an Ogtiern, a Cynghellior, an Oirrich, a Tanist, a Toschach, a Co-arb, a Biatagh, and a Herenach.

So, also, one who has known how difficult it is to find out who pulls the wires in a government department he is in daily contact with, would scarcely take it upon him to explain the policy and secret views of some potentate whose name and age, with perhaps the fact of a battle fought by him, are all the data from which the swelling narrative is derived. Most great historians have been men full of dealings with the world. Gibbon was a member of Parliament, and held intimate relations with the French statesmen of the revolutionary period; Hume was an Under-Secretary of State and a Secretary of Legation; Robertson was the leader of a powerful ecclesiastical party; and Macaulay was a parliamentary orator, an Indian ruler, and a Paymaster of the Forces. The consciousness of powers to deal distinctly and eloquently with great realities seems, however, to have indisposed such men towards researches in obscure corners. To perforate and examine masses of literature only that they might be cast forth as rubbish, with a warning to others to let the heap alone if they desired to escape useless labour, was not to their taste. Principal Robertson began his brilliant History by telling us that "the first ages of Scottish history are dark and fabulous. Nations, as well as men, arrive at maturity by degrees, and the events which happened during their infancy or early youth cannot be recollected, and deserve not to be remembered." Thus by two well-turned sentences a few years of labour are evaded. That Robertson did not throw himself into our early history, but left it to a body of dreary potterers, is the more to be regretted, as he had that peculiar sagacity which helps a man to form right conclusions from scanty information. On all the matters he took in hand, quantities of new discoveries have been made. These tend to completer information than he could give, but he is never superseded as an obsolete and fabulous writer deserving of no attention.

all through feudal Europe. For instance, whether the thanes had or had not a distinct feudal existence, independent of the power of the crown to deal with them as official subordinates, it seems clear that the Abthane was placed among them as a royal officer, deriving his dignity and his power from the crown, and that it was his function to see to the collection of the royal dues payable from the landed estates—something, on the whole, bearing a close resemblance to feudal holding and its casualties.

The form in which the influence of the Conquest was first felt in Scotland, was by a steady migration of the Saxon people northward. They found in Scotland people of their own race, and made a marked addition to the predominance of the Saxon or Teutonic element. About the year 1068 there came among these emigrants a group whose flight from England, and reception in the court of Malcolm, make a turning-point in history. Edgar the Aetheling, the heir of the Saxon line of kings, came over, bringing with him his mother and his two sisters, and such a body of retainers as an exiled court might command. One of the sisters, Margaret, was afterwards married to Malcolm; and thus it behoved the King of Scotland, whether from chivalrous sympathy or from self-interest, to be the champion of the Saxon claims, and the Conqueror's enemy.

Just before the Conquest, that territory north of the Humber, which was neither Scotland nor England, had been again the scene of wars which it is difficult to disentangle, and the desperate efforts made by the Conqueror to master it bring a new element into the confusion. Wherever he felt himself strong enough, he left the Norman mark behind him in the building of a

castle; not a turf fort with wooden houses, such as the older fortresses, but great strong stone towers, which even after the damage of a siege could be repaired, and if taken by the enemy could be recovered and used. Among the most celebrated of these, he built two castles at York; he raised another on the east side of the county, which gave the name of Newcastle to a town which rose up round it, with divers others. A great castle to guard the west was afterwards built at Carlisle.[1] The Conqueror seems to have tried the policy of presenting part of the debated district to one of his fighting northern followers. The one selected was Robert de Comines, or Cumin, or Comyn, the founder of a family afterwards renowned in our history. He was made Earl of Northumberland; but, as the Saxon Chronicle says, his new subjects attacked him in his garrison at Durham and killed him, along with 900 of his followers. At the same juncture the Conqueror, by marching with a great army, was just in time to save his new fortress at York. Edgar the Aetheling had crept out of Scotland as far as York, and was surrounded by the people, delighted to show him honour, when the Conqueror came down on the scene like a thunderbolt, and the Aetheling was glad to flee back to the protection of his brother-in-law. The attempt on York, however, was presently repeated, and that in a more emphatic shape. Three sons of Sweyn, king of Denmark, brought up the Humber a fleet of 240 ships. They were joined by the Aetheling and by other leaders, conspicuous among whom was Gospatrick of

[1] "He then went to Nottingham, and there wrought a castle; and so went to York, and there wrought two castles, and in Lincoln, and everywhere in that part."—Saxon Chronicle.

Northumbria. Thus came on "the Northumbrians and all the country people riding and walking, with a countless army, greatly rejoicing; and so all unanimously went to York, and stormed and demolished the castle, and gained innumerable treasures therein, and slew there many hundred Frenchmen [or Normans], and led many with them to the ships; but before the shipmen came thither the Frenchmen had burnt the town, and also plundered and burnt the holy monastery of St Peter. When the king [William] learned this, he went northward with all his force that he could gather, and completely burnt and laid waste the shire."[1] We are told that William was wrathful because he could not get at the Danish fleet anchored in the Humber, but the Danes seemed content to keep out of his reach. Creeping round the coast, this fleet, which in the old days might have done terrible things, entered the Thames, but wisely attempted nothing there, and returned, leaving the debated provinces to be fought for between England and Scotland. Eight years afterwards, the Danes, unwilling, as it would seem, that the terror of their name should be thus blotted out, showed themselves again: "There came 200 ships from Denmark, wherein the chiefs were Knut, son of King Swein, and Hakon Jarl; but they durst not maintain a battle with King William."[2] As a last memorial of their old ways, they took the opportunity of plundering St Peter's Monastery at York, and then departed, leaving England henceforth free from their harassing inroads.

In the interval between the two Danish descents, the King of Scots tried his fortune in this sadly-tor-

[1] Saxon Chronicle. [2] Ibid.

tured district. He poured a host into Cumberland, plundering and occupying the country. Gospatrick of Northumberland had been his close ally. Whether Malcolm would have kept faith and respected his territory after subduing Cumberland, is a question which Gospatrick decided by taking the initiative and falling unexpectedly on the Scots army in Cumberland. Gospatrick had, in fact, come under allegiance to King William. Having apparently a great force at his command, and relieved of all scruples, the Scottish king swept Northumberland with a ferocity and cruelty which, beyond all the other bloody raids of the period, have left this one as a memorable story of calamity in the English chronicles. As many of these were written at the time when efforts were made to nourish hostile feelings against Scotland, it may be hoped that the picture of cruelty is over-coloured. A troop of thralls or slaves was driven northward, and one of the chroniclers says that these might be afterwards found in every village, and even every hut, north of the border.[1] After this the wretched country might be deemed not worth plundering; but the Conqueror in his turn swept and wasted it. His policy seems to have been, that since he could not make the district a valuable acquisition, he should render it an unoccupied desert, stretching between him and his dangerous neighbour, the King of Scots. The Norman pushed on to the Scottish border, if not some little way beyond it. According to the Saxon Chronicle—"In this year [1073] King William led a naval force and a land force to Scotland, and lay about that land with ships on the sea-side; and himself with his land force went

[1] Simeon of Durham.

in over the ford; and they there found naught for which they were the better. And King Malcolm came and made peace with King William, and gave hostages, and was his man: and the king went home with all his force." A passage like this would of course be seized on as an acknowledgment of feudal superiority; and in the later English chronicles it was described in the proper feudal technicalities.[1] Some patriotic Scotsmen have inferred from this that Malcolm, like several of his successors, did homage for lands south of the border. I cannot concur in this, not believing that the grades and ceremonies of homage were then so far advanced as to admit of one of these complicated transactions. The general historical conditions

[1] "Et homo suus devenit facto homagio et datis obsedibus multis."—Walter of Hemingford. In the original Saxon it is—"He thaer nach ne funde thœs the heom the betere wœre. Malcolm cynge cōm grythod with Wyllelm cynge, was his man him gyslas salde."

Florence of Worcester says that the Conqueror of England penetrated as far into Scotland as Abernathi, and there meeting his vassal King Malcolm, made arrangements for the proper solemnities by which a king of Scots should acknowledge his fealty to a king of England. If the Conqueror reached in Scotland a place called Abernathi, topography must admit that he got as far as the Tay—had reached, in fact, the place where there is an Irish round tower, and where the Picts were, under the old chronicles, reported to have their capital. The question remains, Did William the Conqueror, at the head of an army, march so far northward as to Abernethy on the Tay? If we ask whence Florence got his information, we shall find that it was from the speech of Walter L'Espec at the Battle of the Standard, as it is given by Aelred. There, boasting of what his Norman brethren had done in feats of arms, he tells how their great hero, Norman William, had fought his way through Malcolm's dominions as far as Abernathi. We may suppose it more likely that the speech is slightly misreported, than that it should state a great fact omitted by all authorities contemporary with it. A high authority goes much farther, saying of Aelred's book that "the greater portion of this piece is occupied with declamatory speeches professing to have been made at the Battle of the Standard, and which, from the writer's Preface, may be justly suspected to have been composed by himself."—Duffus Hardy, Descriptive Catalogue, ii. 205.

seem more important, and they give us a transaction between two powerful monarchs—the one, it is true, with by far the greater and richer dominion, and greater power of aggression, but the other with great resources of defence. If William could have achieved the actual subjugation of his neighbour's kingdom as a fief, we may depend on it that he would have carried out his authority so practically and fully that history never could have been in doubt of its existence: if he had achieved this, it could not have been said that in his march to Scotland his force "found naught for which they were the better."

For a few years we have still to wade through the same confused succession of wars, of which we cannot see the exact object or results. In one tendency only are they consistent throughout—in letting us see that, instead of a vassal, the Conqueror had a restless and troublesome enemy beyond his northern frontier. In the years 1079 and 1080 we have the briefest note in the chroniclers, that Malcolm made a raid as far as the Tyne, and that it was followed by an English invasion of Scotland under Prince Robert; but how far this penetrated, or what it effected, we know not. After this we have ten years of cessation from such inflictions. In the mean time the great Conqueror had departed, and Malcolm had to deal with his son Rufus. They first measured swords in 1091, and for this contest we have something like a reason. Malcolm appears to have found the cause of the Saxon line a hopeless game with such a card as Edgar the Aetheling. Six years earlier he had advised him to make his peace with the Conqueror. He did so. It was a solemn affair. As he went furth of Scotland, he was received

with all ceremony at Durham by the Shire-Reeve of York, who "went all the way with him, and enabled him to find food and fodder at every castle which they came to, until they came over sea to the king; and King William then received him with great worship, and he was there in his court, and took such rights as he allowed him."[1]

The Aetheling was afterwards invested with some lordships in Normandy. In the discussions between William Rufus and his brother Duke Robert these were sacrificed. It appears that Duke Robert, having to make sacrifices for peace, found it convenient to make over to his brother the holdings of the poor Aetheling, who immediately went back to Scotland, and sought the protection of his sister's husband. So rapidly following on the completion of this transaction that William Rufus was still in Normandy winding up the negotiation, King Malcolm made the most formidable of all his invasions southward, and penetrated, as it would seem, far into the territory over which the English crown had been consolidating its power during the cessation from such attacks. The affair cannot be so well told as in the words of the Saxon Chronicle, which in such matters is the foundation of all others: —"King Malcolm of Scotland came hither into England, and harried a great deal of it, until the good men who had charge of this land sent a force against him, and turned him back. When King William in Normandy heard of this, he made ready for his departure, and came to England, and his brother the Count Robert with him, and forthwith ordered a force to be called out." It was both a sea and a land force,

[1] Saxon Chronicle, 1084.

but the ships were lost. "When King Malcolm heard that they would seek him with a force, he went with his force out of Scotland into the district of Leeds, in England, and there awaited. When King William with his force approached, there intervened Count Robert and Edgar Aetheling, and so made a reconciliation between the kings, so that King Malcolm came to our king, and became his man, with all such obedience as he had before paid to his father, and that with oath confirmed."[1]

Simeon of Durham, the oldest of the subsequent annalists, adds some particulars which are supposed to clear up this transaction. The English King secured to the King of Scots certain territories which he claimed beyond the border, along with an annual payment of twelve marks of gold. Whether or not, as Lord Hailes suggests, the money consideration "might be in lieu of some other lands which the Scottish King claimed and the English were unwilling to surrender," the best we can make of the affair is, that it was a step in those arrangements by which the King of Scotland found it expedient to hold any lands he claimed south of the border through an understanding with the King of England.

[1] The point to which Malcolm penetrated in England was long a question of difficulty. In Lord Hailes's time it was taken for Lothian; but then how account for the distinct statement not only that he had gone out of Scotland—which was then, it is true, properly the name only of the country north of the Forth—but into England? Lord Hailes says, the words of the Chronicle "have been, and probably will ever be, the subject of fruitless controversy" (i. 21). The word in the Chronicle is "Lothene;" but the editor of the Rolls edition, about the most eminent living Anglo-Saxon scholar, has had his reasons for rendering it into modern nomenclature, as it is here quoted. The question what meaning we are to give to a local name in old spelling resembling Lothian in sound, is important, and will have to be considered further on.

We now come towards the last, for a time, of these sad raids, with their unsatisfactory compromises. Malcolm complained loudly that King Rufus had broken faith with him; and perhaps a movement that he must have observed, the strengthening and garrisoning of the castle of Carlisle, helped him to this conclusion. This was at the juncture when Rufus had performed the part of the sick devil turning monk and relapsing. Stricken with deadly illness, he had promised to restore the property seized from the Church, and the old rights of the Saxon people, "but which he afterwards withdrew when he became well, and abandoned all the good laws that he had before promised us."

The Saxon Chronicle, after this very distinct and brief announcement, goes on to give the last affair with the troublesome Malcolm thus:—

"Then after this the King of Scotland sent and demanded the fulfilment of the treaty that had been promised him. And King William summoned him to Gloucester, and sent him hostages to Scotland, and Edgar Aetheling afterwards, and the men back again, who brought him with great worship to the king. But when he came to the king, he could not be held worthy either the speech or the conditions that had previously been promised him; and therefore in great hostility they parted, and King Malcolm returned home to Scotland. But as soon as he came he gathered his army and marched into England, harrying with more animosity than ever behoved him. And then Robert the Earl of Northumberland ensnared him with his men unawares, and slew him. Morel of Bamburgh slew him, who was the earl's steward and King Malcolm's gossip. With him was also slain his son Edward, who should.

if he had lived, have been king after him."[1] So ended a reign of forty-six years—unusually long in such times, even when falling to a less restless and turbulent monarch.

The Chronicle continues to say, that when the good Queen Margaret heard of her bereavement, "she was in mind afflicted to death, and with her priests went to church, and received her rites, and obtained by prayer to God that she might give up her spirit."

This good Queen Margaret had an influence on the destinies of Scotland much greater than her husband, who, indeed, obtained from her the consideration that made him powerful. She held rank in the Romish Church as a canonised saint, and even the opponents of the old Church have had a good word to say for her from time to time. There had been a great scarcity of distinguished religious persons in Scotland for centuries before her day. The country does not seem to have been blessed with one saint since the time of Adamnan, who was, like Margaret, not a native of Scotland. She holds a more legitimate rank than those old missionaries whose sanctity was established by a sort of popular vote, since her canonisation was formally completed, and the adjustment of the day appropriated to her in the calendar received the special attention of the Holy College.[2] In recent collections of the Lives

[1] Saxon Chronicle, 1093.

[2] It was altered for the second time so lately as the Revolution of 1688, when it was solemnly adjudged to the 10th of June, the day when the poor child, then called the Pretender, was born. The object, of course, was political—to impress that day with the high favour of the Church.

According to the Chronicles, her husband was buried at Tynemouth, but his skeleton was afterwards taken to Dunfermline, where she also was buried. In the year 1250 her remains were removed or translated

of the Saints there is a life of St Margaret, attributed to Turgot, a monk of Durham, who was her confes-

from their grave to a shrine richly decorated with gold and jewels. The ceremony was attended by King Alexander III. and a brilliant concourse. The Breviary of Aberdeen tells us that as they were conveying the shrine with its holy contents to the tomb in which they were to be enclosed, at a certain point they had to stop, for they could convey their burden no farther. Much confused, they took to prayer for a solution of the mystery, when a voice as if from heaven told them that they were passing the spot where the bones of King Malcolm lay; that as the sainted queen and her husband had been one in life, so should they be in death: and no human power could convey her dust beyond her husband's resting-place. The alternative was obvious. Malcolm's bones were laid beside his wife's, and both rested in the new tomb. There is a touch of domestic affection about this anecdote as little akin to the tone of the lives of saints, as another domesticity attributed to Margaret—a profuse application of the text against sparing the rod, whence it is said her sons were so distinguished as monarchs. A portion of the saint's remains, however, were still to have a curious history.

"According to Papebroch's Appendix to the Life of the Saint and Queen, her head was brought to the Castle of Edinburgh at the desire of Queen Mary, who was in it at the time, and on her flight into England in 1567 it was removed to the house of the Laird of Dury, where it was preserved for many years by a Benedictine monk, but in the year 1597 was by him given up to the missionary Jesuits. One of these, John Robie, conveyed it to Antwerp. There John Malder, Bishop of Antwerp, after proper examination, issued his letters, on 15th September 1620, authenticating the head as that of Margaret, and granting leave for its being exposed to public veneration. After seven years the relic was translated to the Scots College at Douay, where, by permission of Herman, Bishop of Arras, and his successor Paul Boudot, it was again exposed, as a genuine relic, to public veneration. Pope Innocent X., by a brief dated 4th March 1645, granted a plenary indulgence to those who should visit the church of the college on the festival of St Margaret; and this grant was confirmed by his successors at various times afterwards. It is believed that this relic disappeared amid the tempest of the French Revolution.

"With regard to the other remains of Queen Margaret and her husband, if we may believe the accounts given by Papebroch, which he seems to have partly, if not wholly, derived from a statement by George Con in his treatise 'De Duplici Statu Religionis apud Scotos,' they were, after much labour, acquired by Philip II., king of Spain, and by him placed in the Church of St Laurence at the Escurial, with the inscriptions, 'St Malcolm, King; St Margaret, Queen,' on the urns containing

sor.[1] This is a production of a very different character from the grotesque hagiologies of the Columba period. It wants their glimpses into the heathen world, and the simplicity that lets out the passionate nature and worldly ambition of the powerful priest who uses his sanctity to achieve his projects, and, when that fails, seeks the arm of the flesh. We have not the supernaturalities and flagrant falsehoods of all kinds, but there is less truth to be picked out of the whole. The Life of St Margaret is a type of the shape which hagiological literature had taken for the purposes of the Church. It is a rhapsody rather than a biography, written to help an object which was accomplished—that of getting her a place in the calendar of saints.

Though professing all along to be the account of a companion and friend, the Life gives us scarcely anything to bring before us St Margaret in her fashion as she lived.[2] One cannot help still more regretting that there is so little to be found realising the nature of her husband. That she softened the barbarous ferocity of his nature, is but repeating in general terms what every female saint does to somebody. It is likely enough that the old effeminate polish of the Irish Dalriadic

them. Bishop Gillies recently informed me that, in the hope of having the relics of the sainted Margaret again restored to a Scottish shrine, he had invoked the aid of the present Pope in an application to the Spanish government for their restoration, but, as I understood, they could not be found, or at all events identified."—Transactions of Antiquarian Society of Scotland, ii. 89.

[1] Reasons for attributing it to another hand are given by Papebroch, the editor of the Bollandist version.

[2] Where the hagiologist admires the piety and beauty of her discourse, we may suppose him to record the precise impression made on him; but when he extends his admiration to the heavenly and devout thoughts that occupied her mind as she kept silence, it is not so easy to admit his testimony.

rulers had passed away, that a rougher race had succeeded, and that in such an establishment as the King of Scots kept, the presence of a good woman, trained in the higher civilisation of the Anglo-Saxon court, would create so beneficent a contrast with all the surroundings that she might well be reverenced as a saint. That he followed her wise counsel in the internal administration of his kingdom is one of the vague panegyrics of which one can make nothing; but when we are told that she was very learned, and that her husband could not read, the broad and conclusive statement affecting him is at once believed. It is not much worth doubting the assertion that he was fond of handling her books though he could not read them, and that he sometimes affectionately kissed those she most esteemed. When we are told that, being well acquainted with the Saxon language as well as his own, he became the expounder of her wisdom and piety to his subjects, it is provoking that we are not also told what language he spoke—whether it was Gaelic or Teutonic. One reform she is said to have prevailed on him to effect bears on matters a good deal under discussion at the present day. She found that the people of Scotland did not respect the *Dies Dominicus* or Lord's Day, but followed their usual occupations upon it as on the ordinary week-days. On her remonstrance this was rectified, so that the first day of the week was sanctified from labour, whatever other uses it might be put to.[1] It was doubtless at her desire that a monastery was

[1] On this point her biographer makes her cite certain passages from the letters of St Gregory the Great, which Papebroch, the editor of the Life in the Bollandist Collection, declares he can find neither in Gregory's Letters nor his Dialogues.

founded at Dunfermline, a favourite place of residence with both of them; and her biographer must needs speak to facts when he says that the splendid decorations of gold and silver with which she beautified the building may still be seen, especially the crucifix of these metals, with precious stones inlaid. From other authority we know that she rebuilt the church at Iona, which had been desolated by the Norsemen.[1]

Through means of the scanty and shadowy touches thus furnished, with a few others, Malcolm of the great head comes forth as the first king of the Scots who has something like an individuality about him—who is more than a name and a pair of dates with a list of battles between. He is not a model king according to modern notions. We find him a man of strife, who, in his quarrels and ambitious projects, doubtless wasted much blood and desolated many a hearth. But he was in this what his age made him; and as he meted to others, so he served himself. He cast his own life into the bloody lottery. The monarch who any day may be found dead in the field beside the child of his affection and the heir of his throne, may cry quits with the philanthropic philosopher. It was not yet the age of chivalry, but Malcolm seems to have had some of it in his nature. His kindness to the royal exiles of England was brave and generous, even if we suppose that it served a policy. He bore very tolerantly with the intolerable and impracticable Aetheling, and dearly loved his sister.

At one juncture there was a little brightening in the prospects of the unhappy Aetheling. He had come back from an ineffectual sojourn in Flanders, throwing

[1] Ordericus Vitalis, book viii.

himself and his sister on her husband as usual, when Philip of France offered to take him in hand, and endow him with the lordship and castle of Montreuil. He got a princely outfit from Malcolm, the particulars of which, as given in the Saxon Chronicle, look as if Scotland had then made some progress in the wealth she acquired before the breaking-out of the great war. "King Malcolm and his sister gave him and all his men great gifts and many treasures, in skins decked with purple, and in pelisses of martin-skin and weazel-skin, and in palls, and in golden and silver vessels, and led him and all his shipmen with great worship from his dominion." The unlucky Aetheling, however, benefited little by these gifts. A storm arose, which drove his vessels ashore, and scattered their contents. This must have been on the coast of England, for some of his people were seized by "the Frenchmen" or Normans; "but he and some of his best men went back again to Scotland, some ruefully going on foot and some miserably riding." It was then that Malcolm recommended him, as a last resource, to give up his claims and seek the favour of King William. When he thus went up to the English court, the same untiring friend took care that he should not be empty-handed; "and King Malcolm and his sister again gave him and all his men innumerable treasures, and very worthily again sent him from their jurisdiction."[1]

On the death of Malcolm matters looked as if the hereditary line of succession were to be broken in upon as of old. We find Donald Bane, a brother of Malcolm, reigning for a few months; he is then followed by Duncan, called an illegitimate son of Malcolm,

[1] Saxon Chronicle, 1075.

whose reign counts two years. Both are so indistinct and fugitive as to have given ground for an amiable supposition that they merely acted as guardians of the young heir. One real impression, however, was left behind them—they began to drive forth the English strangers who had been sheltered under the reign of King Malcolm. In 1097, Edgar, the son of Malcolm, fought his way to his father's throne. By a transaction, of which it is a pity that we have but the briefest statement, he was assisted by an English force under the command of his uncle the Aetheling, who is found acting the hero for once.[1]

Edgar reigned for eight years in a quietness unusual to a king of the Scots at that time. There did occur during his reign an event of great moment, but it was a domestic event solely, and it pointed to pacific results. On the 15th of November, in the year 1100, his sister Matilda was married to Henry, king of England. It is rare for even a royal marriage to carry so much political importance as this. It was a union between the two families which were on the way towards dividing between them the rule over the island of Britain. But still more momentous, it was the union of the heir to the Norman Conquest with a daughter of the old Saxon race of kings. Endowed as it thus was with the prospect of a great future, the marriage had its warm friends and equally warm enemies. The chronicles tell us that it gave infinite joy to the Saxon party, who had abandoned all prospect of restoring the old line or driving out the strangers. The Norman and the Saxon, though they spoke a different language, were now finding that they belonged to the same race, and had such

[1] Saxon Chronicle, 1097.

common qualities as would prevent it from coming to pass that the one should remain the lord and the other be for ever the slave. Coupled as they were in a common fate, they began to have a surly respect for each other, and to act like those who find it wise to make the best of the conditions that have rendered them inseparable companions. One thing could not easily be got over—that high polish and command of accomplishment which made the Norman feel that the Saxon even of reddest blood was a boor beside him; and nothing could be a better precedent for a general exchange of courtesies, and an obliteration of social demarcations, than this union between the highest on either side. For this reason the court of Norman adventurers disliked the match. They saw in it the probable loss of the vast influence they possessed, as a body without whose consent and co-operation the Norman king could not hold his throne. If he could make himself acceptable to the Saxon nobles and their people, here was a power other than theirs giving support to the king. Possibly they may by their own conduct have suggested that this would be a wise union. Several of them in succession had each pressed his own personal suit on the Scottish Saxon princess. The difference in rank between them and their king was not so great, according to their estimation at least, as to make an exchange of rank utterly hopeless and preposterous; and there was no counting what amount of influence the fortunate lord who could represent the old Saxon line might exercise. Difficulties, however, ever fell in the way of these suitors; and none of these great vassals having yet carried off the prize, it may have been deemed prudent permanently to remove it out of their reach.

The Church had occasion to offer some curious impediments to the match. Matilda had been brought up by her aunt Clementina, sister of the Aetheling, who was abbess of a great religious house, seemingly that of Wilton. The princess lived here in seclusion, and was said to have taken her vows as a nun; nay, to have been seen veiled after the monastic fashion. At the instance of Archbishop Anselm, who had grave doubts whether he could lawfully solemnise the marriage, the young princess herself was questioned, and, according to the archbishop's biographer Eadmer, she made a revelation which has been often referred to as vivid testimony to the licentious insolence of the Norman nobles. She admitted that she had worn a veil, or the semblance of a veil, in public; and she said she had done so by her aunt's command, as a protection from the liberties which she must otherwise have to endure from the Norman followers of the court.

On Edgar's death in 1107, when he was succeeded by his brother Alexander, he left it as a bequest or injunction that Cumbria should be ruled by his younger brother David. It seems that Alexander, whether he would willingly have acceded to this or not, found it prudent to do so, as his brother had much influence with the Normans, who were now spreading northwards. The disjunction of this part of the dominion of the King of Scots, though it was but a brief arrangement, was still important in history. Both Scotland and England were then endeavouring to push a clearly-defined frontier as far as each could through the old field of contest that lay between them; and the ruler of Cumbria, being a different person from the King of Scotland, put an impediment to the Scot-

tish frontier forming itself on the southern border of that district.

From the other end of his dominion this king received a hint that Scotland was not yet under one rule to its northern extremity. We are told that he was enjoying himself in his royal residence at Invergowrie, on the north bank of the Firth of Tay, when he narrowly escaped an attack by a northern army led by the Maarmor of Ross, assisted by the Maarmor of the Merne. The king gathered a force and drove them northward beyond the Moray Firth, which he crossed, meeting his enemies in their stronghold. There is very little to be known of the affair, but it looks, on comparing the authorities, as if it had struck a decided blow at these northern independent powers, and was a distinct step in the progress towards the predominance of the King of Scots. It is briefly referred to in the usual histories as the vigorous "quelling of an insurrection;" and so far as the Maarmor of Merne was concerned, this term might perhaps be accurately applied.[1]

King Alexander died a natural death, on the 27th of April 1124.

[1] The affair is distinctly and picturesquely told by Wyntoun, but one would like an earlier authority for the details.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

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